

Calvinist Contact

January 1, 1988 / 43rd year of publication / No. 2099

Thinkbit for 1988

*Expect the best! It lies not in the past.
God ever keeps the good wine till the last.*

From: Writings by William Pierson Merrill

Evaluating government with a conservative yardstick

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — The Mulroney government should act on principle rather than steer the national economy by pragmatic politics, advises the director of the Vancouver-based Fraser Institute, Dr. Michael A. Walker, in his third annual "report card" on Canada's Conservative government.

The principled economic policy Walker would like the government to adopt is the classic *laissez faire* doctrine of capitalism which calls for the least possible regulation by government and the greatest freedom for private business. The use of such an economic yardstick can help us understand our government's economic practice, he says.

Walker is keenly disappointed in the government's economic performance, especially because it is a Conservative government whose prime

minister has a strong commitment to free enterprise. Yet Walker feels that the government has improved somewhat and, as he puts it, "it's never too late."

Reports on 18 economic areas

In the 18 areas he evaluates, Walker gives the government Fs in seven, Cs in five, Bs in two and As in four. Not so good, but better than last year and not nearly as bad as two years ago.

The top marks come for trashing the National Energy Policy and the Foreign Investment Review Agency, for moving to free trade, and for the Meech Lake Accord which "... will provide for the possibility of decentralized programs and [which] removes fiscal blackmail from federal-provincial relations." Walker applauds the Meech Lake Accord because it will reduce the powers of

the federal government.

The grade of B is given the government's control over the current year's deficit and its moves toward financial deregulation with the "... presumption that the private sector and individual initiative will be permitted to do most things untrammelled by the interventions of government"

Categories that rate the mediocre grade of C include inflation control, job creation, and a new policy on business competition which is "badly flawed" and only "a slight improvement over the previously existing policy." Also rating Cs are efforts to hold the line on government spending, and on "tax reductions to stimulate growth." Walker wants the government to reduce the top income tax bracket from 45 per cent down to 35 per cent "with consequent greater incentive to individual initiative and economic performance."

Failing marks

A failing mark is given for the government's performance in guarding against future deficits, especially in times of economic downturn. A perceived problem is social welfare programs, which



Are congratulations in order for the Mulroney government? Not according to a conservative report card.

increase in cost precisely when government income is down. The unemployment insurance program is said to need massive tightening. Labour laws and agricultural policy badly need reform. Failure to move on privatizing Petro-Can and Air Canada is judged "shameful."

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Responsible agencies want porn bill modified

Marian Van Til

TORONTO, Ont. — The Ontario Arts Council is persuaded that if anti-pornography bill C-54 is passed as is, it will "threaten legitimate artistic activity in a way not foreseen by the drafters of the legislation." Libraries across the province have similar concerns.

The bill's current text would make it illegal to deal in "any matter or commercial communication that incites, promotes, encourages or advocates" various kinds of sexual conduct. It also places the onus to prove artistic merit on the artist, rather than making those who object to a work prove that it is *not* of artistic worth.

The bill defines *erotica* as "any visual

matter, a dominant characteristic of which is the depiction in a sexual context of, for the purpose of the sexual stimulation of the viewer, a human sex organ, a female breast, or the human anal region."

Sub-section six in defining pornography gives arts groups trouble when it states that pornography is "any visual matter that shows masturbation or ejaculation not referred to in subparagraph 4 [sex acts *without* 'degradation'], or vaginal, anal or oral intercourse.

This section would make illegal the depiction of such acts regardless of context or intent.

Continued on page 2 ...

Provincial funding given to Christian adoption service

Angela Terpstra

SASKATOON, Sask. — Saskatchewan's Conservative government recently approved a grant of \$100,000 for a one-year contract to Christian Counselling Services (CCS) of Saskatoon to begin an adoption service for Christian parents.

Christian Counselling Services has been operating in Saskatoon for 12 years offering family or marital counselling, as well as providing support for emotionally distressed Christian clients. CCS has also been counselling unmarried mothers and feels the new adoption service will be a natural extension of its current work. Rooted in an evangelical background, it has been depending solely on private voluntary support from various Saskatchewan churches until this recent grant.

Not all churches support the grant to CCS. The United Church has been particularly critical of CCS's definition of a Christian as someone who is "born again, saved, and claims Jesus Christ as their Saviour." The United Church spokesperson, Linda Slough believes since CCS will only look at Christians as prospective parents, the province of Saskatchewan is "going backwards" to the days when church agencies handled almost all social services.

The opposition NDP, has also criticized the government grant, suggesting that non-Christian couples will have a harder time adopting. Premier Grant Devine replied that this criticism is unfair because there is still the provincial Department of Social Services to look after the needs of all parents, regardless of religion.

Human resources minister Grant Schmidt further affirmed the need for a Christian adoption agency, saying that it is fine for a mother to request that her baby be placed with a Christian family and equally fine for Christian parents to request a baby through a Christian agency.

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Dance (first version). Henri Matisse (1869-1954). Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Ontario Arts Council worries that if bill C-54 is passed without modification, works such as this will fall under its definition of pornography.

News

Responsible agencies want porn bill modified

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Wants modification

In a letter to federal Minister of Justice Ray Knatyshyn, the Arts Council recommends two modifications to the proposed legislation:

— that the definitions of pornography and erotica be tightened, so that legitimate artistic activities are not caught by legislation intended to deal with criminal matters; and

— that the "reverse onus" be removed, so that the Crown is required to prove that the material subject to prosecution is not of artistic, educational, scientific or medical purpose.

In proposing those changes, the Arts Council says it "wants to make clear" that its concerns "are not grounded in any disagreement with the government's objective to take measures against child pornography and violent exploitation of any person." Nor do they believe that "artists as individuals should

be seen as being above the law."

But it believes that the bill's ambiguous definitions of pornography and erotica are open to "arbitrary interpretation." The way the bill stands, it would be possible to ban all depiction of nudity, for example, no matter what the context: many of the great works of art that have come down through the centuries would technically fall under such a ban.

Innocence presumed

Nor does the Ontario Arts Council believe it is fair to place the onus for proving "artistic merit" on artists themselves, particularly since scientists and educators need only prove scientific or educational purpose in their endeavours.

Placing the onus on the artist amounts to "the necessity of the accused to prove him/herself innocent, contrary to the legal keystone in our society that the accused is

innocent until proven guilty." That, the council maintains, is "unacceptable in principle, and extremely harsh in its implications for artists and arts organizations who may be charged under the new provisions."

Librarians and writers have similar concerns. Recently, metro Toronto's 32 libraries closed for an afternoon so employees could attend "an educational session on bill C-54." At that session novelist and literary critic Margaret Atwood said that it is virtually impossible for an artist to defend his or her own work on grounds of artistic merit because "one person's artistic merit is another's dog's breakfast."

Masters restricted

Philip Monk, curator of the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) pointed out that because the bill would consider the depiction of the female breast as erotic, the works of Rubens,

Poussin, Degas and many others would be restricted. He said, "It seems that the great religious and mythical subjects of Renaissance and Baroque painting could not be conceived without some display of nudity."

Depictions of the martyrdom of St. Sebastian, for example, show "a person causing or attempting to cause, in a sexual context, permanent or extended impairment of the body," in the bill's words. But a pornographic "act of bondage" is far from the intent of artists' depictions of that scene. Monk says artists have used sexual imagery in this instance to convey to us the martyr's humility, suffering, pathos and ecstasy.

Biblical understanding

Arie Van Eek, executive secretary of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, says that that group's Committee for Contact with the Government (CCG) has been struggling with the text of the proposed bill for a year-and-a-half.

According to Van Eek, the CCG agrees that "the definition of pornography as opposed to erotica is not clear." There is much art, he points out, whose intent "is clearly not pornographic and when seen within its context or purpose is not meant to titilate." What is needed, he asserts, "is getting back to a biblical understanding of human sexuality."

The CCG will make a public statement in the near future and it is the latter issue to which it hopes to address itself; it will not be commenting on the details of the bill.

Questions playwrights

Christian Heritage Party (CHP) leader Ed Vanwoudenberg questions the motives of artists in regards to the proposed bill. He thinks that some may be "asking for license to promote

perversion." When pressed to elaborate, he stated that in his experience that was most true of current playwrights and not necessarily of visual artists.

Vanwoudenberg agreed that there is a definite difference between erotica and pornography (despite the fact that the CHP's resolution on obscenity doesn't clearly distinguish between the two). "The intent of the item is absolutely important," he says. He suggests that erotica is not the problem; the problem is pornography which degrades. "Something can be erotic without being degrading," he admits. And the depiction of broken, sinful situations is legitimate in art if it's clear "the results of such values are explored and shown to produce a broken life-style."

Vanwoudenberg feels the government must be responsible for promoting "wholesome values," and will have to judge whether artistic materials involving nudity, e.g., help do that in a given instance. He admits that judgment calls will have to be made and "that's very hard to do."

Bad stuff will circulate

Cathy Vander Grift of the Edmonton office of Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) sees the need for a strong anti-pornography bill, and feels that "some of the fears of civil libertarians are overstated."

But she is also concerned about the wording of C-54. Ironically, under its definitions, "some of the worst pornography would be considered erotica." CPJ agrees with the Ontario Arts Council's assertion that the onus to prove artistic merit should not lie with the artist.

As is, Vander Grift says, "Fringe cases will take up all the time in court and all the [bad stuff] will keep circulating in the meantime. This law is going to be tied up in the courts forever."

BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Gus Polman, Richard Vanderkloet, William van Geest, Clarence Joldersma

Unplanned patriotism

The first leader of the Parti Quebecois died last month and the second leader quit. These events mark the close of an era in Quebec politics. Where will Quebec go from here? And how do we assess the PQ era of the past dozen years?

Politics in Quebec has historically been characterized by two main features: corruption and protection. The politicians have been corrupt, but they have always claimed to protect Quebec's distinctive culture. A separatist element has always been present, but had no significant popular support before 1976. It was a surprise, therefore, when Rene Levesque's Parti Quebecois won the provincial election that year. However, Levesque won primarily because he promised honest government (a change) and a more vigorous defense of Quebec's distinctiveness against English-Canadian domination. To allay fears that the PQ would lead the province out of Canada, Levesque promised at that time that no such move would be undertaken unless expressly authorized by a province-wide referendum.

The referendum was duly held in May 1980, and 60 per cent of Quebecers voted *non* to Levesque's watered-down independence proposal known as "sovereignty association." True to his word, Levesque honoured the people's will and backed off from independence. He concentrated instead on safeguarding Quebec's cultural interests in the forthcoming constitutional amendments promised by Prime Minister Trudeau. Nevertheless, the stated goal of the Parti Quebecois — independence — had to be abandoned for the foreseeable future. On the strength of his promise to continue providing good government and to protect French Canada's interests, Levesque's Party won re-election in 1981. However, the Party split as the committed separatists balked at Levesque's increasing acceptance of a united Canada.

Under severe pressure, Levesque resigned as party leader in June 1985. The party elected another moderate, Pierre Marc Johnson as Levesque's successor. However, the divided party could not retain popular support and lost the election in late 1985. Johnson struggled for two years, but his position was impossible to maintain. Radicals inside and outside the party continued to demand an unequivocal separatist stance. Meanwhile, Premier Bourassa's Liberals, reaping the fruits of Levesque's political legacy, appeared to be doing an adequate job of providing honest government and protecting Quebec's distinctiveness. Johnson's resignation last month was his acknowledgement of this fact.

The likely election of Jacques Parizeau as the new leader of the PQ will mean that the party has been abandoned to its small core of hard-line separatists. The moderate centre of the party will most probably defect to the Liberals, with the newly-formed NDP picking up some support. If the Liberal Party moves to the left to prevent the NDP from gaining momentum, watch for a resurgence of the Union Nationale on the political right.

In any case, the Parti Quebecois interlude in Quebec politics is over. However, it has served as a catalyst to improving the morality of Quebec's politics and to increasing the scope of government protection for Quebec's cultural uniqueness. Perhaps these accomplishments have actually contributed to making French and English Canada more tolerant of each other. The irony of Levesque's success may be that it destroyed separatism for good in Quebec. In that case, Levesque may take his place alongside those other Canadian heroes who attempted to destroy Canada and made it stronger instead: William Lyon Mackenzie, Louis Joseph Papineau and Louis Riel.

Richard Vanderkloet teaches history at Toronto District Christian High School, Woodbridge, Ontario.

Vancouver's carol ships

Alyn Edwards

Vancouver's famous Christmas carol ships have been running for nearly three decades and are very much a Canadian west coast tradition.

In the two weeks prior to Christmas every year, about 80 yachts sail along the shoreline of Vancouver and its waterfront suburbs. The boats are decked out with coloured lights and decorations. Some follow a theme like Santa Claus and his reindeer. The boats are packed with people singing Christmas carols as the convoy proceeds slowly down the shoreline.

Thousands of Vancouverites line the shores. Many waterfront property owners

decorate their docks with Christmas trees and lights for those on the boats to enjoy.

The tradition started 27 years ago when a hotel promotion manager contacted parks commissioner George Wainborn with an idea to decorate a barge with lights and have a choir singing carols on the water in front of the hotel.

Today, it wouldn't be Christmas in Vancouver without the carol ships. Members of the public can go along for a nominal charge as the carol ships cover some 30 miles of shoreline.

This year, the ships go out on the evenings of Dec. 11, 12, 13, 18, 19 and 20.



Pensive Dutchie

Syrt Wolters

Bert Rhebergen wrote a very interesting article in *Calvinist Contact* of Oct. 31, entitled "Astronomy and simple faith can co-exist." His article gives ample proof that he knows far more about astronomy than yours truly. Often I've wished to know more about those things, but life is just too short to specialize in everything.

Many scientists have, apparently, great difficulty in jibing the story of creation as it is recorded in the book of Genesis with the findings in the universe. Plain logic tells them that it is impossible that the universe was created in a mere six days some 6,000 years ago. After all, hasn't the Creator given to us, his image-bearers, the ability to think logically?

But is it not also true that our gravest objections to humanism are that too much value is attached to logical thinking? To the human mind, Christianity is not logical at all.

Rhebergen makes a faith statement when he says: "I am inclined to follow the *reasoning* [emphasis mine] of Professor Howard Van Till, author of *The Fourth Day*, when he says that "if an object is two million light years away, it must also be at least two million years old, since it takes that long for the light to travel to earth where we can see it today."

I have great difficulty with statements such as this. Such a statement assumes too much. It assumes, for instance, that the Creator himself is tied down to

the laws of the universe, which He was just in the process of establishing!

A visit to Eden

Imagine that it would have been possible for today's scientists to visit the Garden of Eden in its second week. Everything was ready; God had finished his creation and rested on the seventh day. Now it is Sunday again and a delegation of scientists of the 20th century is welcomed by Adam and Eve.

The scientists cannot help being impressed — everything is so lush and green. They see trees in every imaginable form and shape; young saplings but also mature trees, which, no doubt, must be a couple of hundred years old. They watch the two majestic rivers, Tigres and Euphrates. Rivers that wide must have come from mountains far away. Adam and Eve themselves are beautiful specimens of the human race, probably in their forties or perhaps even in their early fifties.

The scientists have no difficulty establishing that the creation as it appears to them

must be several centuries old. Plain logic makes this clear as day.

But while considering and calculating everything they observe, they totally ignore the scriptural record which tells them that all that they saw was created last week!

Man not that insignificant

There seems to be another assumption: that the earth is not so important in relation to the total universe. It is less than a speck in all the oceans combined and even less than that. Consequently — we cannot be as important as we think we are. At best, the Christian scientist concludes that God, the Creator, becomes greater and greater with the progress we make in probing the universe. Man becomes smaller — God becomes greater! Consider the vastness of the universe: it defies description; it's mind boggling.

But I would like to approach it from a totally different angle. First I should like to go back to the creation story. There is a beautiful order. The creation starts from the simple to the more complex. It is as if God with bold strokes makes a rough outline. But what strikes the reader is that the earth was created first! Initially as a potential clump of raw material, but, as Isaiah says in

chapter 45:18, "For God himself formed the earth, He established it — not as waste did He create it, He formed it to be inhabited."

The Creator has one great plan in mind: to create his own image as the crown of the entire creation: Man! Every detail of the creation proceeds to that end. First light is created; and its component, darkness! Man will be in need of both. Then water finds its place in the order of things, again with man in mind, that image-bearer of God himself! Next, on the third day, the light-bearers come into place: sun, moon and stars! Does man need the stars? And

all the other galaxies? Yes — I am inclined to think so.

Man needs the workshop to find out how great his creator is! But is it entirely impossible that God made this workshop ready for man? Is God less great if we believe that He threw the galaxies in their place as if they had been there for a trillion of years? I believe that this makes our Creator immeasurably greater than when we tie him down to the laws He has set for man and the universe.

Syrt Wolters is a semi-retired barber living in Victoria, British Columbia.

Soviet Christians call for changes

SANTA ANA, Calif. (ODNS) — A group of leading Soviet Christians called for changes in the legal status of churches and religious groups in a Moscow press conference in September 1987. The group made public a letter listing 11 main areas of concern which was sent to Andrew Gromyko, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev.

The group asked the Soviet government to grant the church and religious societies the same

legal status as individuals and the free return of all church property; to grant the church freedom to teach religious doctrine and hold evangelistic activities; and the freedom to contact and travel to international religious centres, among many other things.

Evaluating the government with a conservative yardstick

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Over it all is the government's "failure to set about a conscious and deliberate program of philosophical reorientation." "On the contrary," the report continues, "the government has deliberately avoided making any such change and, in fact, has apparently adopted a strategy of neo-eclecticism. Under such a mugwump strategy, all policy positions are regarded as equally worthy and distinctions among them are made on the grounds of some political calculation not on the basis of the principles which are at stake."

Things to do

In summing up changes it asks the federal government to make, the Fraser Institute is especially concerned about financial overextension of the government when the next financial recession comes. It wants the government to eliminate social welfare benefits and unemployment insurance to individuals whose income exceeds \$50,000 a year. It says experience ratings should be

introduced to unemployment insurance so that "... individuals who use unemployment insurance on a regular basis as part of their income planning pay higher rates of insurance than those who may only use it once in a lifetime or not at all. (Otherwise, it's not an insurance program but a welfare program with lax entry standards.)"

Walker also says regarding labour laws, it is "... essential for the government to deal with increasing problems of overbearing union power." And the law regulating picketing needs to be changed.

In a postscript Walker urges that Canada lift its economic sanctions against South Africa, and participate with Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and others on a constructive program to "devolve" the power of South Africa's central government in a federation of cantons similar to Switzerland's.

Prediction of Mulroney's re-election

In spite of massive failure

when so much good (in the eyes of the Fraser Institute) could be accomplished, Walker feels that Mr. Mulroney's re-election is almost assured. He feels that the government will need to call a federal election soon on the issue of free trade because Ontario and two or three other provinces oppose it.

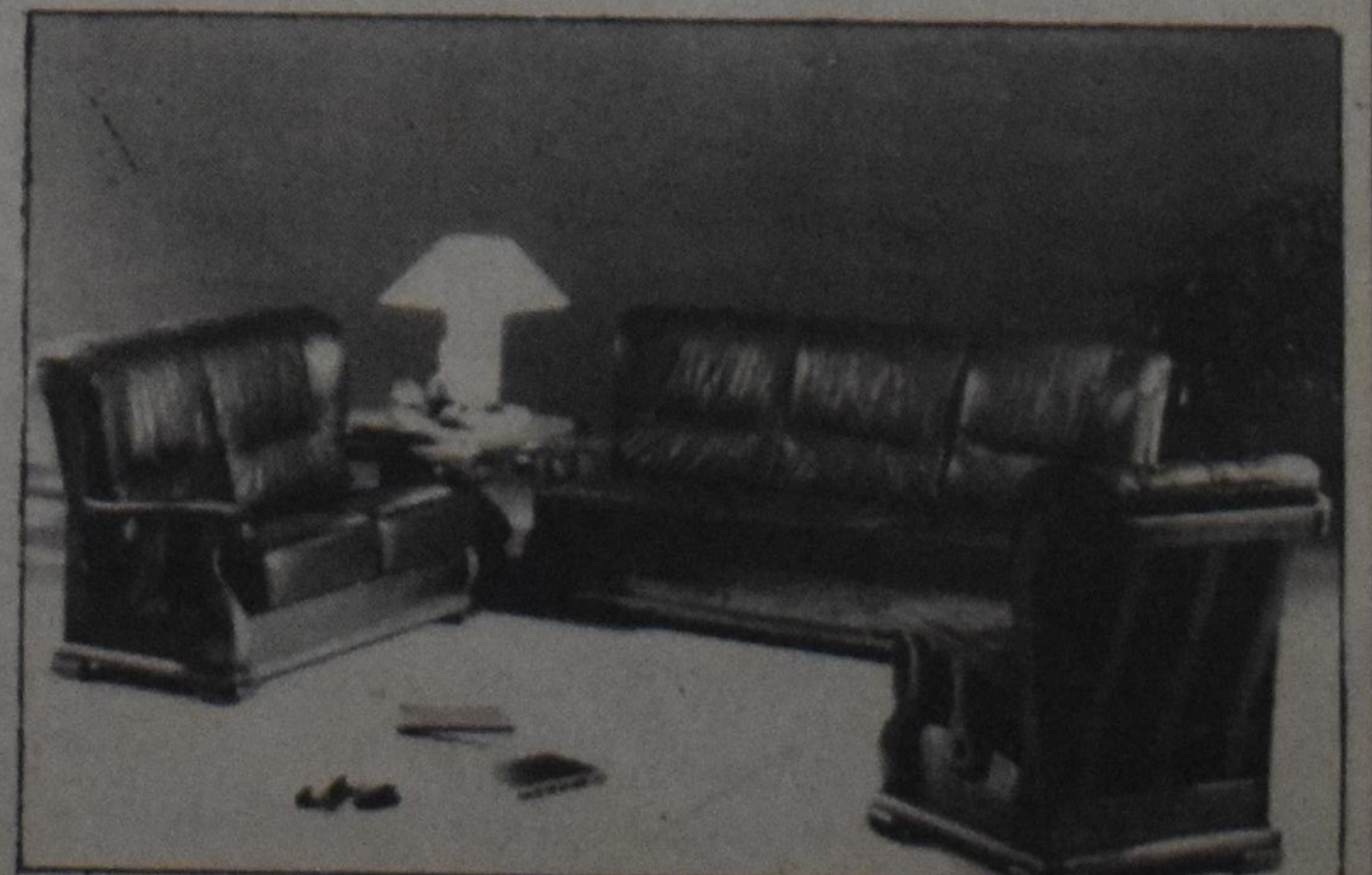
Quebec strongly supports free trade, but because the Liberals oppose it they will not be able to carry Quebec, which they need to do to win the election. The NDP is likely to displace the Liberals as the official opposition but, as they too oppose free trade, they will not be able to form the government. The next

election is, therefore, seen to be hinged on the issue of free trade, says Walker. In fact, the performance of the PC government is rated on how well it is judged to have performed in relation to economics.

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Calvinist Contact: (ISSN 0410-3882) is an independent, Christian weekly, serving the broader Reformed community with news, ideas and opportunities for contact. It supports and encourages every endeavour that seeks to proclaim the Kingship of Jesus Christ.

Editor: Bert Witvoet
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 Typesetting: Kim Yungblut

Editorial Advisory Board: James R. Dickey, Sam Da Silva, Anne Hutten, Judy Knoops, Peter DeBruyne, Nicholas B. Knoppers, Alayne Langerak, Ineke Brouwer-Parlevliet, Sonya Vander Veen-Feddema, William Van Huizen.

Canada mail: Second class mail registration #0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ontario. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvinist Contact, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9.

U.S. mail: Calvinist Contact (USPS 518-090), published weekly except for July 1, 15, 29, Aug. 5 and Dec. 23, by Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9. Second class postage paid at Lewiston, NY 14092. Send address changes to Calvinist Contact, Box 110, Lewiston, NY 14092.

Advertising: Display advertising deadline is Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. of the preceding week. Classified advertising deadline is Thurs. 8:30 a.m. for the next week's issue. See events page for rates. The publication of comments, opinions, or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by either Calvinist Contact or Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited.

Printed in Canada.

Subscriptions:	Canada	United States
Six months	\$15.00	\$13.50 U.S.
One year	\$25.00	\$22.50 U.S.
Two years	\$47.50	\$42.50 U.S.
Three years	\$70.00	\$62.50 U.S.
Overseas:	\$100.00 airmail	\$45.00 surface mail

Editorial

The Washington summit through binoculars

Does 1988 look a little brighter to you now that Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev have promised to reduce their nuclear arsenal by four per cent? Moscovites watching the signing of the agreement on a giant public screen broke out in applause. People interviewed in the West generally approved and saw the event as a ray of hope.

There were also voices of fundamentalist Christians who lamented the signing of the agreement. With a reduced arsenal they seem to feel less secure over against communism and at the same time they firmly believe that nuclear war is going to usher in the thousand-year reign of Christ. Theirs is a strange mixture of fearful fatalism coated with visions of glory. It almost seems as if such people consider themselves responsible for bringing this world to an end.

Most of us think it an occasion to rejoice when world powers make a positive move. It makes sense to cut down on nuclear weapons. It makes economic sense, which is why both sides were willing to change the trend of nuclear build-up. It makes military sense, seeing that the object of military strategy is to provide greater security and safety in the world. It makes spiritual sense *if* people learn to trust God's way for their security: doing justice, seeking righteousness, loving mercy.

Two teams, same game

One should not be surprised that Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev are able to work towards a common goal. As part of humankind, Americans and Soviets have similar needs and hopes. Those who discovered that Russians can also be nice people must have been totally naive, if not ignorant, before.

But there's another reason for co-operation: socialism and capitalism are not true enemies. They are merely two faces of an economic world that tries to make it without God. Don't

think that capitalism cannot evolve towards socialism, and vice versa. In fact, we are witnessing such evolving trends both in the capitalistic West and in socialistic China and the Soviet Union. Perhaps 20 years down the road we'll have a hard time telling each other's economic systems apart.

That's also true of political expressions in the world. The dominant spirit of democracy is not any more God-honouring than the spirit of communism. Both arise out of the fire of the French Revolution, only at different dates. Structurally, democratic states offer greater freedom of speech and assembly and provide more opportunity for private initiative (valuable differences!), but they breathe the same spirit of secularism as do communist countries in the Kingdom-of-heaven scheme of things. The rhetoric may give the impression of irreconcilable differences; reality shows otherwise. The Russian lady was not so far off when she named her twins Mikhail and Ronald.

Mild enthusiasm

Which is why an event like the recent signing in Washington is always a matter of relativity to Christians. It's good, but it's not of ultimate significance. It makes sense, but it's not the answer to world peace and economic reform. Seeing the leaders of two materialistic and humanity-glorifying societies come to an agreement, under the spotlight of personality-oriented news media, forces Christians to take distance from the event and not get caught up in the swirl of false expectations.

Ronald and Mikhail took a step away from the brink of nuclear disaster. Good. Is the sign of Christ flickering in the sky tonight? How about applauding the Lord for having kept the world from blowing itself up in 1987?

Paul said it best: "Stand firm, let nothing move you." Good advice, also for 1988.

BW

Out of concern for the peace and the glory

I love the Church of the Reformation. That is to say, I love its sound doctrines, its balanced theology, its solid scripture-rootedness, its comprehensive "world-and-life view." That view constitutes the vantage point from which almost all my relatives, friends and acquaintances look at life. It is their perch, you might say, and I joyfully share it with them.

The Christmas angels of long ago must also have been Reformed in their outlook, for they sang not just about glory to God in the highest, but of peace on earth as well. Theirs was a comprehensive focus of praise and practical application.

As for that, of course, the heavenly hosts have it pretty soft for they have no mundane headaches. They don't have to be at catechism at 7:30 or church council at 8:00; they never have to attend a single committee meeting and, being angels, they never, ever have to go to choir practice. It's also not likely angels need a boost in winter, or swelter in traffic on hot summer afternoons. There's just no market for aspirin in the angelic spheres.

Moreover, no angel loses any sleep over the fourth or any other day of creation, nor does a single one of them get excited over the women-as-clergy question. And certainly no angel, as far as I can tell, is bothered much by any of those many "isms" that endlessly seem to trip us up. Yet all of those activities and concerns keep *our* agenda jam-packed.

"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace" It takes angels to be simple and direct like that. No deep doctrines, no theological treatises, not even a sermon. Now *there* was a simple perch if ever there was one! Yet so powerful

was their direct message that people of all stripes still remember a part of it today and include it in their Christmas messages to each other. "Peace on earth"; that's everyone's wish. Millions of people all around our pretty blue planet yearn for it.

A cover-up

So, what happened to the other part of the message, the "Glory to God" part? And how can it be that "the world," after all these centuries, still doesn't understand that the peace of which the angels sang is much, much more than merely the absence of war?

Well, folks, there's been a gigantic cover-up. Those to whom was granted a measure of insight into the real meaning of peace, of *shalom*, wedged it pretty solidly beneath mountains of hocus-pocus and theological clap-trap, not even to mention entire continents and generations of bickering and outright war! The Reformation cleared away some of the garbage, but the church — and you can take your pick between "institute" or "organism," I'm not fussy — has filled the ages with the chunks and whittlings of the many perches it sought to shape for itself. And *that's* why the world has forgotten about *Glory to God*.

Do we remember it? Will we in 1988 be more concerned with our perch than with the needs of the world? May your year be peaceful, and filled with concrete actions that reflect the compassion of Christ. That would bring glory to God.

Reinder J. Klein,
 Vancouver, British Columbia

GUEST COLUMNIST

"Touching"

Ron Dube

While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. (Luke 5:12,13)

Leprosy was a humiliating disease that automatically carried a sentence of rejection and isolation. Lepers were forced to cry out, "Unclean! Unclean!" wherever they went; they were forced to live alone, banished from people and exiled from home.

A leper would most certainly have suffered mentally as well as physically. To be afflicted with a disease that ate away the flesh; to be forced to watch his or her body rot away was terrifying and painful — a living death, with no sympathy from others. It was law that anyone who had such a disease was to be labelled unclean and made an outcast. (Leviticus 13:45,56)

People didn't understand this disease. Although it was innocently acquired, like most other diseases, leprosy was associated with shame, horror and guilt. Therefore the leper was hated by the "clean." Most wouldn't even touch lepers or their clothing.

Leprosy caused an attitude that sounds familiar these days. In 1987, another disease has captured our imagination and paranoia has set in. Once again the clean want to force the sick to live a life of exile. AIDS has invaded the bodies of men, women, children. Sadly, many have died. Even more sad is the fact that so many have been forced to live in humiliation, rejection and isolation, like lepers. Society wants victims of AIDS to cry out, "Unclean! Unclean!"

Not much has changed since the days when leprosy was common. Why? Fear of the unknown is very real; and it's all right to have fears. But fear doesn't justify forcing others to live in pain, alone, unwanted, labelled and unloved. Leprosy and AIDS are but two of the many diseases that we've had to deal with since the beginning of humankind. The world of medicine has always discovered a cure for these diseases. Unfortunately, people have often continued to deal with diseases in ignorance. Society contains many people who want to label a child with AIDS and demand that laws be declared to remove such a child from school.

Would Jesus touch someone with AIDS as He touched the leper? Did Jesus tell the leper to stay away? Was Jesus afraid that He would catch this disease if He touched the leper? On the contrary, Jesus showed compassion and love towards the leper. He touched the man without any fear or disgust.

Jesus today, I think, would show compassion and love towards AIDS victims just as He did to the lepers of his day. Why was Jesus able to do this? He saw the leper as a human being in need and showed compassion. Jesus didn't see the disease in the person, He saw a person with a disease. Just as Jesus had compassion, we should accept AIDS sufferers as sisters and brothers in need of compassion, understanding and even more, love.

Ron Dube is a prisoner in Collins Bay Institute, Kingston, Ontario.

Editor's Note

Even grief should be expressed correctly

Mr. Hank Vandermaas of Hamilton (see letter below) is right in saying that some obituaries in *Calvinist Contact* make it look as if the Lord suffers a lengthy illness or endures much pain. We hereby follow his suggestion to make some general remarks about this matter. It was evident to Mr. Vandermaas that it is somewhat difficult for us to edit the text of classified advertising, especially when it concerns the expression of grief in the form of an obituary. We have tried to edit classified advertisements in the past, only to be reprimanded by those who submitted the faulty text.

What Mr. Vandermaas is really asking us to do is give a lesson in English grammar. That's not difficult to do, but whether or not it will take is another matter. It seems that people often compose obituaries on the basis of previous obituaries. And those previous obituaries were written by people who copied obituaries that went before them.

In fact, we looked in our archives, and in the Feb. 28, 1957, issue of *Calvinist Contact* we found a Dutch obituary that shows the same structural problem indicated by Mr. Vandermaas. It reads: "Na een korstondige ziekte nam Jezus op in Zijne heerlijkheid onze geliefde Man, Vader en Grootvader." (After a brief illness, Jesus took into His glory our beloved husband, father and grandfather.)

In all likelihood then, this way of phrasing an obituary immigrated by boat to Canada from Holland in the 1950s. And you can be sure that it entered Canada without a visa. If they had known about it, the professional associations of English teachers in

Canada would have called for a royal inquest into this preferential treatment of illegal immigrants!

In fact, they might have sent the following communique to the government of Prime Minister St. Laurent: "Dear Sir: It has come to our attention that a boatload of dangling and misplaced modifiers has disembarked in the ports of Halifax and Montreal. We are, Sir, referring to a Dutch contingent of obituary introductions that either do great injustice to the grammatical structure of Her Majesty's impeccable English language, or, even more seriously, question the orthodox tenets of the Christian faith upon which our country has erected many a sentence. It has come to our attention that, upon introducing themselves, these strange concoctions announce such oddities as: 'After a lengthy illness, the Lord took home,' or 'After a four-month battle with cancer, the Lord called unto Himself,' or 'On Sept. 7, at the age of 51, Jesus called home,' etc. In other words, Sir, the Lord is portrayed as having a lengthy illness and of battling with cancer for four months. And Jesus is said to have been 51 years old, though we know from the gospels that he did not live beyond the age of 33 or thereabouts.

"However, Right Honourable Sir, let us move to a less metaphorical plane. We know, of course, that we are, in fact, talking about a shipment of Dutch grocers, farmers and carpenters, who came to this land via such questionable structures as the Volendam and the Rootbeer.

"These wonderful folk do not understand that phrases like 'After a lengthy illness,' 'after a four-month battle,' and 'at the age of 51' must be placed near the verb they modify. They should be saying: 'After a lengthy illness, John Doe went to be with his Lord.' Then we know that John Doe was ill and not the Lord. Or, they could say, 'The Lord took unto himself our dear father John Doe, aged 51.' If this deformation of the English language is not attended to forthwith, we recommend repatriation of all deformed Dutch immigrants."

So far the possible text of a communique to the prime minister of that day. Maybe we can learn from it. Thank you, Mr. Vandermaas. And to all our readers who send in obituaries: we know that obituaries are sensitive expressions of feeling; however, we would honour the deceased if we also made them grammatically correct expressions of feeling. Let's break this more than 30-year stranglehold of incorrect tradition.

Bert Witvoet

Letters

Playful poem trivializes

I am disappointed that you published the poem "God in a Box" (Dec. 4). While being critical of a world which puts God in boxes, the poem *also* puts God in a box — a box made of trivializing word plays, puns, cute dashes, cheap alliterations.

"Wise men found you magi-cally ..."? Seriously, this is not good poetry. It calls too much attention to itself. And when the subject is God, that hurts.

Nick Overduin,
St. Thomas, Ontario

Incomplete job

Referring to your editorial "Strong houses need good foundations" (Nov. 20 issue, an editorial about the need to do principled thinking) if you had added to it: therefore become members and supporters of the Christian Heritage Party of Canada, you would have done a real job. Its principled foundation in all its work is God's Word only.

N. Groot,
Houston, British Columbia

Edit obituaries

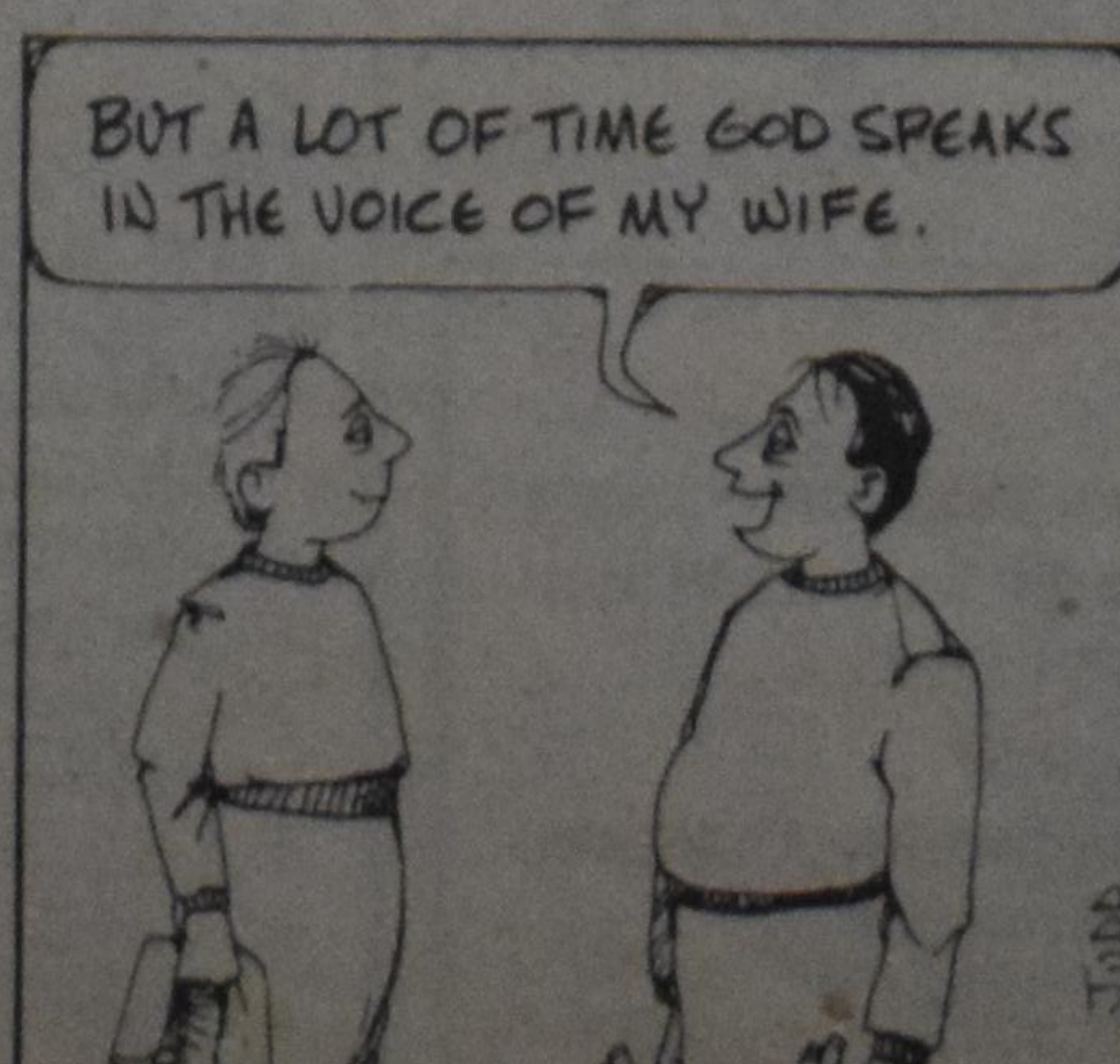
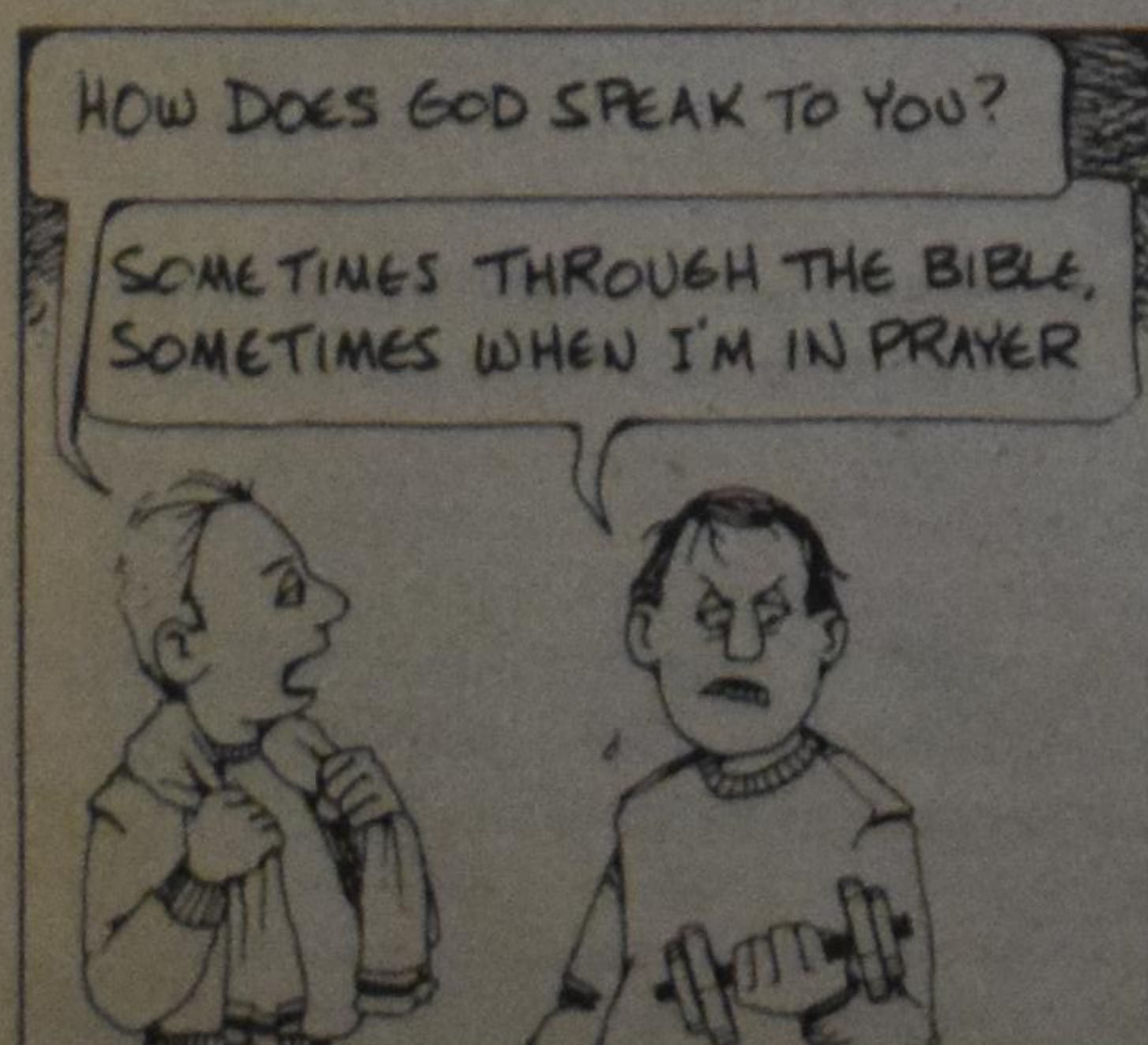
I realize that at times you have to "wrestle" with the lay-out, but

particularly in the most recent issue I find the mixing of anniversaries and obituaries unpleasant to put it mildly.

Secondly, (and my observation results from an article in *Trouw* I read a few years ago) the intro text of many obituary notices needs editing. I know that you do not wish to tamper with submitted copy, but you may wish to write an article on the subject in general. Judging by the way announcements start, it is the Lord who underwent a long illness. The Lord did do no such thing. It was the person who passed away who had the illness.

H.J. Vandermaas,
Hamilton, Ontario

BEYOND BELIEF™



Oops!

We apologize to members of First Christian Reformed Church, St. Thomas, Ont., for trying to remove them to Sarnia (C.C., Dec. 18, p.6). The headline had its geography right; the story had it wrong.

MVT

Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Progress in Wycliffe Bible translations

Robert VanderVennen

The arrival of New Testaments in 16 more languages in the past fiscal year is exciting progress, says James C. Dean, Executive Director of Wycliffe Bible Translators of Canada, in his annual report. Eight of these languages are

spoken in Latin American nations — Brazil, Peru, Columbia and Bolivia — with the others being in Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Australia, Mexico and among an Indian tribe in the United States. Six Canadians have participated in the translation

work which reached completion this year. (Geert de Koning, Christian Reformed Church member in Calgary, heads the Canadian Division International Development Assistance department which raises funds for Wycliffe in Canada.)

Twelve of the 16 new translations serve population groups

of 12,000 people or fewer.

Work on the Apalai language in Brazil was begun in 1962 and was completed by Canadian translators Ed and Sally Koehn for a tribe of 350 people. The New Testament in the Amarakaeri language of Peru serves 500 people. Often in cases like this the language has never existed in written form,

so the translators first need to devise a way to write the language and then teach the people to read it. In such cases, some may wonder whether the cost and effort are justified.

On the other hand, a group who receives such intense and prolonged attention from foreigners is bound to be deeply impressed with the importance the others place on them. This may bring them to a position of great openness to receiving the gospel.

A high percentage of professional linguists worldwide are evangelical Christians; among them much pioneering cross-cultural anthropology is done by Christians, though their primary goal is evangelistic work that is supported by missions donations.

The costs of producing *New Testaments* in the 16 new languages were underwritten by World Home Bible League, the International Bible Society, Wycliffe Bible Translators, and the Bible Society of Papua New Guinea.

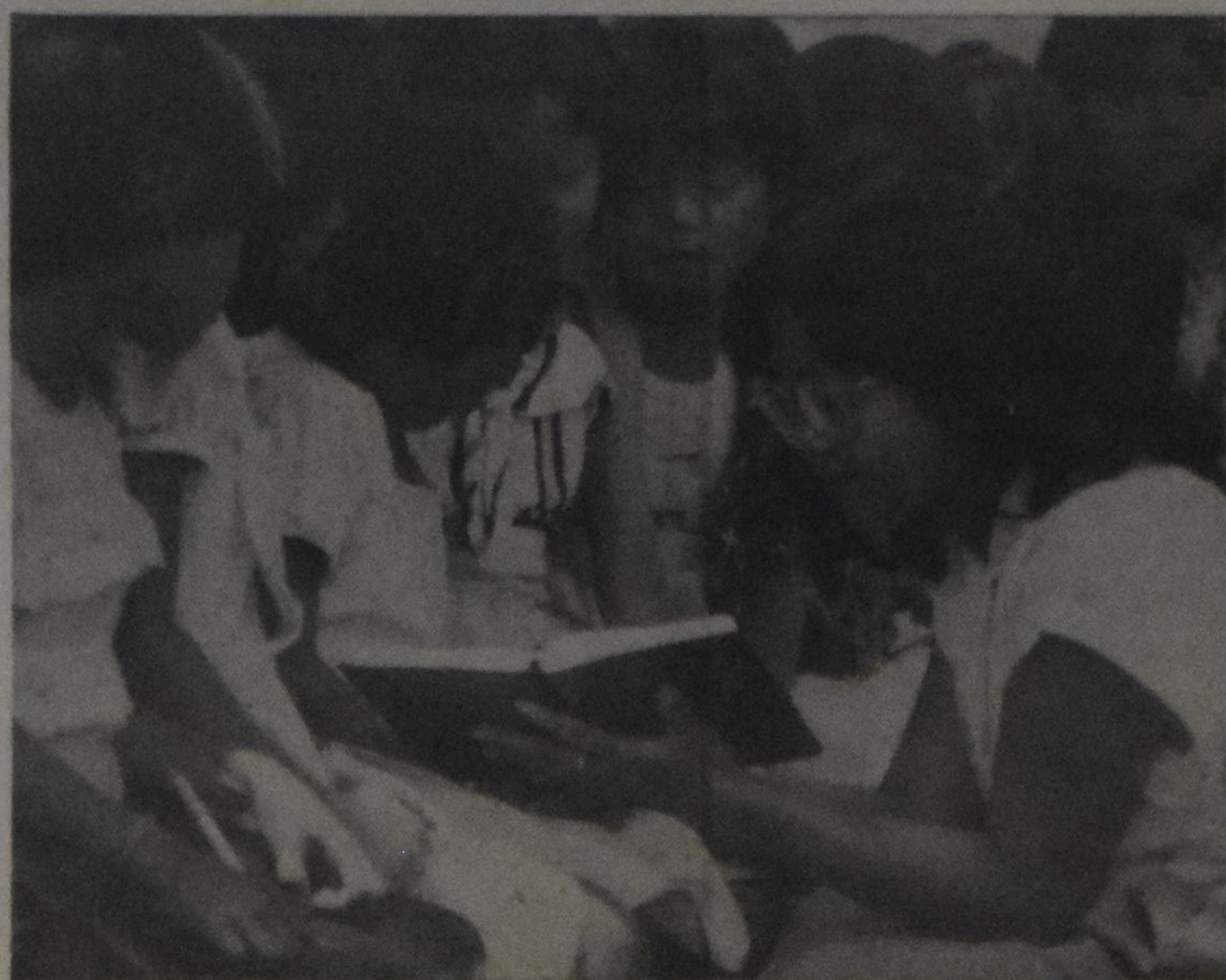
Pennsylvania House passes abortion law

HARRISBURG, PA (EP) — The Pennsylvania House of Representatives passed a proposal Nov. 24 that would, if made law, require a woman to notify her sexual partner before having an abortion. The law also requires girls under age 18 to receive parental consent or a court order for an abortion.

"This vote demonstrates, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that the people of Pennsylvania, speaking through their elected representatives, reject abortion as a legitimate solution to social problems," said Garnett

Biviano, president of the Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation. Biviano called the 140-59 House action "the highest recorded pro-life vote in the history of the Pennsylvania Legislature."

Rep. Stephen Freind, who made the proposal, said the law was needed because current law allowed teenage girls to get abortions without their parents ever knowing they were pregnant. He also said men should have the right to be informed before a child they had helped conceive was aborted.



The New Testament has been translated into 16 more languages by Wycliffe this year, eight of these are languages spoken in Latin America.

Greater compassion for AIDS sufferers

PRINCETON, NJ (EP) — Polls taken by the Gallup organization indicate that public opinion is swinging around toward greater support and compassion for AIDS sufferers. Since July the proportion of Americans believing that AIDS sufferers should be treated compassionately has risen to 87 per cent from 78 per cent, and

the percentage of people objecting to employers dismissing AIDS carriers has gone from less than half of those polled to 63 per cent. According to the poll, white Evangelicals are most likely to see AIDS as a punishment and to blame the victims for having the disease (58 and 59 per cent respectively).



Pastoral letter

Leonard Schalkwyk

Touring, the Christian way

These days it is the "in" thing to make trips. All kinds of "packages" are available to a variety of destinations, with varied groups who join many different tours.

People have come back from these telling me that they missed a spiritual dimension. Sometimes they were thrown in with a group whose life style was decidedly non-Christian.

Others came back saying that their tour was "neutral." They relaxed in body, but their souls were not fed. The busy schedule did not even include the possibility of attending a worship service.

Just as we have to develop a Christian life style when at home and at work, so we have to develop a Christian ethic for travelling vacations.

On tour trips, one does not have much choice but to "join the crowd," wherever that crowd may move. So when you plan to join a tour, take into account the possible spiritual values.

When you take a Christian tour to Israel, you can be sure that it will be biblically enriching.

Chicago or the Caribbean

The Back to God Hour, radio ministry of the Christian Reformed Church, provides tours to Holland, Michigan, and Chicago that give an exciting insight into that ministry. Moreover, during such a tour you are in the company of fellow Christians. The Back to God Hour also has a Caribbean tour that includes a visit to their broadcast facilities on the island of Dominque.

The World Home Bible League has organized tours to Mexican mission outposts, and the Home Mission Board of the Christian Reformed Church can take you to their fields in New Mexico.

As Christians we claim for Christ the field of education, politics and other areas of life. Why not claim our vacation and recreation for Jesus?

Cyprus would be an exciting place to travel to. Possibilities are being studied to organize a tour to the Evangelical Study Centre on Cyprus, operated by the Middle East Reformed Fellowship. There, you will be able to meet people from Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Iraq and other Mediterranean countries. You can visit the places Paul and Barnabas touched on their first missionary journey. Cyprus also has one of the finest beaches and climates in the world.

What a blessing to worship with Christian Arabs in Nicosia or Lanarca. How touching to hear about the afflicted church of Christ in Lybia, where Kadhafi oppresses Christians. Despite hindrances, however, Jesus builds his church.

New Christians

The other day there was a wonderful conversion. A young man in Iran went to listen to the lectures of the Ayatollah Khomeini, to become a leader in the Islam. Even though in Iran people speak Parssee (Persian), Islamic religious lectures are always in Arabic. Thus, Khomeini lectures in Arabic. To learn the language better, the young man had begun to listen to an Arabic radio broadcast, which "happened" to be a gospel broadcast! He continued to tune in and then confessed his sins, and became a Christian. Despite the obstacles, he continues to be faithful to his Saviour.

Do you see how faith-enriching it can be to take a Christian tour? You hear and see a lot about the Kingdom.

Next time you plan a trip, do not only think of relaxation for your body, think about enriching your soul as well. You really will have something to talk about when you return, and you will have become a more vibrant Christian!

Leonard Schalkwyk is pastor of Springdale Christian Reformed Church.

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Mid-America Reformed Seminary
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(712) 737-3446

Religion/Theology

From whence December 25?

John Valk

In the last few weeks Christians around the world reflected again on the birth of the central figure of their faith. For centuries now this has been a joyous celebration of the crucial turning point in the historical journey of humankind. Every Dec. 25, we commemorate the birth of the God-man come to save the world.

While we set aside this date, there exists no firm historical evidence to indicate that the actual birth of Jesus of Nazareth occurred then. Furthermore, the setting aside of a special day to celebrate his birth did not occur, at the earliest, until a number of generations after the apostles. Only in the 4th century, 300 years after the life of Christ, was a special day — Christmas — set aside. And, this date was not universally nor automatically established in all major ecclesiastical centres of the Christian world.

Origins

The earliest indirect evidence of the possible celebration of a Feast of the Nativity of Christ (as Christmas was initially called) comes from Clement of Alexandria (155-220), an early church scholar. He mentions it in regard to the practice of the Basilidians in the second century.

However, it has been argued that the date commemorating Christ's nativity was initially the 6th of January. This was the Feast of Epiphany, the date on which the birth and baptism of Jesus were simultaneously celebrated. The earliest direct evidence for that comes from a source dated sometime around 373, indicating that it was most likely introduced before 325 CE. It appears that this feast was the one observed by the Basilidians.

It is not clear whether the Feast of the Nativity was at first universally celebrated on Jan. 6, and only later changed to Dec. 25. What is clear, however, is that the December date originated in Rome. (It was imported later to the Eastern Church.) When exactly the Dec. 25 Feast of the Nativity emerged in Rome can be pieced together from scant evidence. But that evidence points to Liberius, who was pope from 352 to 366.

A Philocalian calendar, found in Rome, mentions a Christian celebration on Dec. 25. This calendar contains a

chronological list of bishops of that city. It was initially compiled in 336 but was later revised. The list ends with Liberius. However, only his date of ascension is given. Not included is his banishment in 355 by Emperor Constantius for having refused to subscribe to a heretical anti-Nicean formula. Therefore, the revised calendar must be from the year 354 at the latest. Included in it is a reference to Dec. 25 as the beginning of the ecclesiastical year. Scholars generally agree that the mention of the December date belongs to the later recension, not the original text.

Liberius delivered a sermon when Marcelina, sister of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, became a nun. In that sermon, mention is made of the Feast of the Nativity. The earliest date on which this ceremony could have been held was 353, and it appears to have been held on the 6th of January. Therefore, sometime between Jan. 6, 353, and the revision in 354 of the Philocalian calendar, Pope Liberius changed the date of the feast to the 25th of December. The first Christmas celebration occurred in Rome, it appears, in 353 or 354, and it became centred in a church named after him: Basilica Liberii (later known as St. Maria Maggiore).

The December celebration of the Feast of Nativity spread from Rome to other centres very slowly. Evidence for its initial emergence in other places is scant, and is generally gleaned from the writings of scholars and bishops. The celebration did not occur in Constantinople until sometime after 378. It was probably introduced in Cappadocia in 383, in Antioch in 388, and in Alexandria sometime between 400 and 432.

The December celebration of the Feast of the Nativity did not occur in Jerusalem until the 5th century. Jerome (331-419), biblical scholar and translator, is known to have criticized the Greek custom in this city of celebrating Christ's birth in January instead of December. While Christ's nativity and baptism had for sometime been celebrated in combination on the 6th of January, evidence indicates that a separate Nativity celebration in December did not take place until the reign of Juvenalis, bishop of Jerusalem from 425-458. In any case, the date was certainly fixed by 635, as

indicated in a sermon by Sophronius, bishop from 634 to 638.

Why Dec. 25?

While there is general agreement as to the birth year of Jesus, no clear historical evidence exists regarding his actual birth date. Why then was Dec. 25 finally chosen?

The earliest source which discusses this is Clement of Alexandria's *Stromateis*, written between 193 and 211. In it, he outlines viewpoints concerning possible dates. These dates include Dec. 25, Jan. 6, Apr. 19-26, and even May 20. (Clement himself seems to have preferred Nov. 18, 3 BCE.)

Much attention concerning the dating has focused on a chronology based on what is known as the "plan of the ages," a theory on the history of the world. In an anonymous work entitled *De Pascha Computus*, the first day of creation is asserted to have been Sunday, Mar. 25. Through a complicated calculation based on Old Testament dates, symbolic numbers, solar and lunar cycles, parallels drawn between Jesus and the sun, the day of the Nativity is assumed to have been on the same day of the year as that of the creation of the sun: Mar. 28, three days after the creation of the world.

Hippolytus, a 3rd century presbyter and teacher in Rome, appears to have fixed the Feast of the Nativity on the day in 232 CE which was the Passover. But there is confusion as to whether this was to be a fixed date or a moveable date, that is, either fixed on Mar. 25 or moveable to April 6. Furthermore, it is not clear whether the date referred to Christ's birth or his conception. If it referred to his conception, the Nativity would possibly be fixed on the 25th of December.

Evidence also exists concerning the influence of the solar year in dating of the birth of Christ. The vernal equinox and the winter solstice are used to support either a January or a December dating.

Feast of the Sol Invictus

The dating of the Feast of the Nativity has also been linked to the pagan festival dedicated to the consecration of the sun.



Photo: Eerdman's Handbook to the History of Christianity
"The earliest indirect evidence of the possible celebration of a Feast of the Nativity of Christ comes from Clement of Alexandria, an early church scholar." This figure of a Christian scholar is from a sarcophagus in Rome.

Dec. 25 was the feast of the *sol invictus* ("invincible sun") of Mithraism, a mystery cult originating in Persia and thriving in the late Roman Empire.

Some had insisted that the coming of the Messiah, as with the creation of the world, has taken place at the vernal equinox (Mar. 25). Since his coming was taken to be at conception, the Nativity fell naturally on Dec. 25, nine months later. This was also the Feast of the Sun (*sol invictus*), the time when the victory of light over darkness becomes apparent with the lengthening of the day. Here the image of light over darkness was extended to the role of the Christ.

It is doubtful that the Feast of the Nativity was set to compete with sun worship. More likely it was established along the lines set out in *De Paschas Computus*. But the two dates do coincide, and it cannot be doubted that the leaders of the church made use of this coincidence.

The church obviously had to

compete with numerous pagan rites and festivities. Syncretism at the popular level was always a threat in the early period of Christianity, and it became difficult to eradicate. The church was anxious, therefore, to distract the attention of its flock away from old heathen practices by celebrating its festivals on the same day.

That Christians appropriated the birthday of the sun god for their purposes was not, however, without its consequences. In the mid fifth century, Pope Leo the Great included an admonition in a sermon preached on Christmas Day. It was directed to those of his flock who paid reverence to the sun while on the steps of St. Peters, then turned their backs on it when they went inside to worship in the westward-facing basilica.

John Valk is a campus pastor at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton.



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Education

Robert VanderVennen, page editor

Scientists discuss biology teaching

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — Fifty Christian scientists and science teachers shared their views of teaching biology in a climate of controversy, especially at the high school level, at the annual meeting of the Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation held Oct. 31 at Spring Garden Baptist Church, Willowdale, Ont. Of special interest was the fact that speakers included the leaders in writing the recent biology teaching guidelines for the schools of Ontario.

Jack Bell, an evangelical Baptist who supervised the writing of the new biology guidelines, told the group that there is a new emphasis on being reflective about science, in contrast to the older subject-oriented emphasis. "We want students to be creative in science. One of our goals is that students develop their values and beliefs," he told the group. Biology courses in the pre-university track must include instruction about evolution because it is the operative explanatory principle in biological science today. The teaching of creation scenarios is permitted but not required, said Bell.

Two other experienced science teachers who worked with Bell on the new guidelines expanded on Bell's presentation. Dr. Ted Anderson, Head of Science/Biology at East York Collegiate, took a more philosophical approach, reflecting his Ed.D. studies in philosophy of science and curriculum studies. Drawing on the philosophy of Yale physicist Henry Margenau, Anderson — who has been organist and choirmaster at his church for 24 years — emphasized that "data doesn't speak for itself — data is what you make of it."

Geraldine Connelly pointed out that evolution, with emphasis on its history and mechanism, is a compulsory core unit in senior science, and is implied in other courses. She has taught and served as science department head in the Separate School system, and was honoured as "Science Teacher of the Year" in 1982.

She says that in the Catholic view no contradiction exists between evolution and the Christian faith because religion and science are separate matters. She quoted with approval the statement of Nobel laureate T. Dobzhansky that "Evolution is God's method of creation." Connelly has been loaned to the Ontario Ministry of Education and has temporarily taken the place of Jack Bell, who recently retired.

Biblical teaching on creation

The final speaker, Prof. Donald Leggett of Ontario Theological Seminary, whose doctorate in Old Testament is from the Free University of Amsterdam, gave a guided tour of what the Bible says about creation. He showed how the accounts in Genesis 1 and 2 speak about God in ways that contrast with conflicting ancient Near Eastern beliefs.

"The God of creation is also the God of history, and the Bible always speaks of creation in the context of praise to God, of doxology," he said. He then explained creation statements in the Psalms and creation in relation to eschatology.

These experienced science teachers pointed out that Christian teachers of science in public schools are especially sought out by other teachers for advice in teaching about evolution in the schools, and, therefore, have sensitive leadership positions.

The Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation has 200 members in Canada, the majority of whom are university professors and research scientists. Its counterpart in the U.S., the American Scientific Affiliation, has recently produced an influential booklet on *Teaching Science in a Climate of Controversy*.

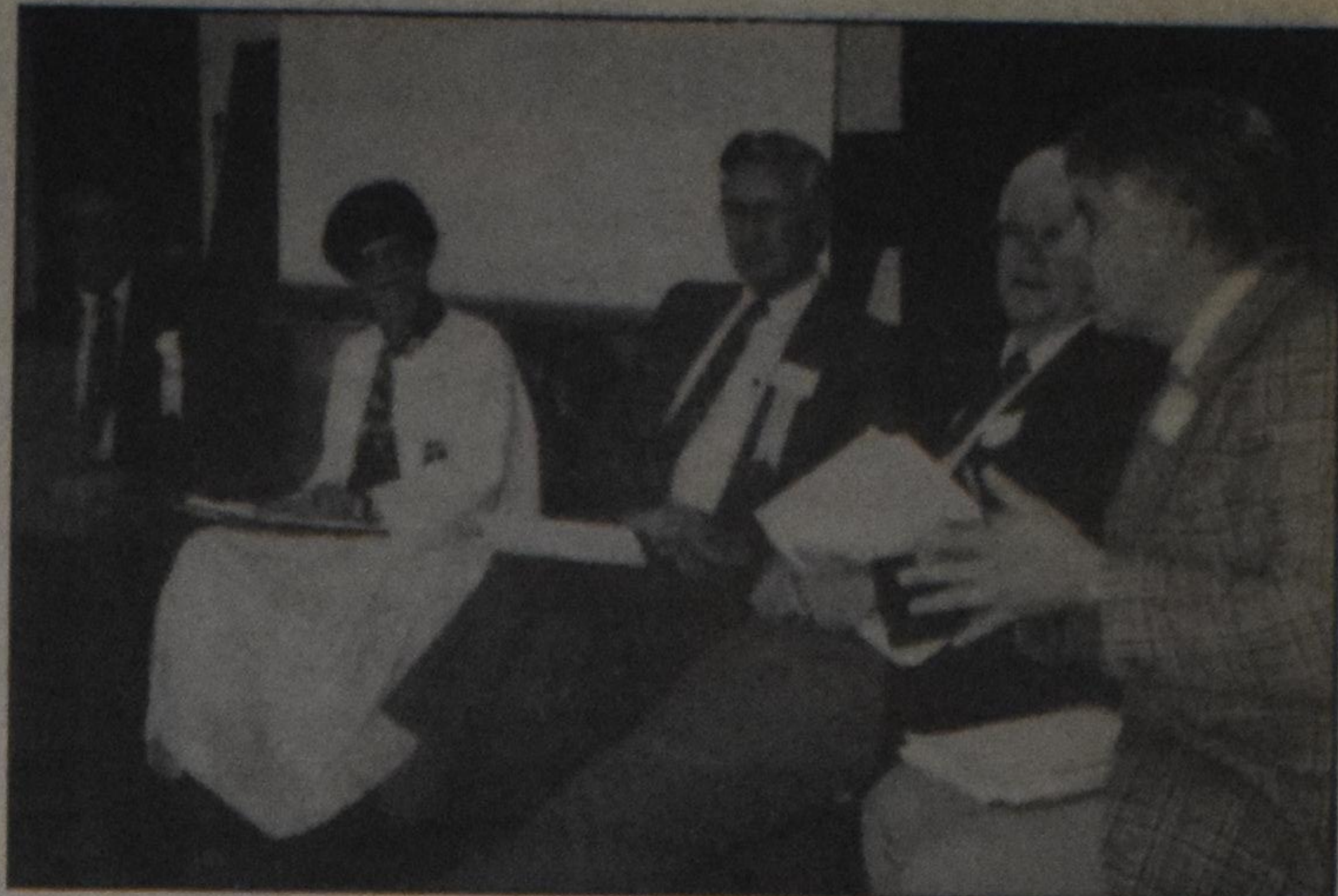


Photo: Robert VanderVennen
Panel discussion teaching biology: l.-r.: Ted Anderson, Geraldine Connelly, Jack Bell, Donald Leggett, Daniel Osmond (moderator).

Trinity's nursing program accredited

C.C. staff

PALOS HEIGHTS, Ill. — The nursing program at Trinity Christian College received an eight-year accreditation from the (U.S.) National League for Nursing in mid-October,

announced Dr. Donna Ipema, director of Trinity's Department of Nursing.

This means that Trinity's new nursing program now has full professional recognition. The evaluation procedure included a visit to the Trinity campus in March by representatives of the accrediting association.

In their written report the examiners cited as major strengths of Trinity's nursing program the support of the college as a whole for the nursing program, faculty commitment to professional training, and the emphasis on the spiritual dimension of nursing care.

Thunder Bay school rises from ashes to 25th anniversary

Robert VanderVennen, from a report by Cathy Ypma

THUNDER BAY, Ont. — On Thanksgiving weekend, the Thunder Bay Christian School community celebrated the 25th anniversary of the founding of the school, having rebuilt it after it was destroyed by fire on May 31, 1986. The theme was "Celebrating God's Faithfulness."

The fire, caused by lightning, destroyed the original four classrooms. The decision to rebuild was made without hesitation, and by September 1986 the new classrooms were ready for use. Over the winter a gymnasium/auditorium was added, ready for use in February 1987.

A thanksgiving banquet included a speech by the CRC's Joel Nederhood, radio preacher for "The Back-to-God Hour." Four hundred people attended. Former principals, teachers and board members came from as far as British Columbia, Alberta, Michigan and Eastern Ontario for the celebration.

Children's festivities included a balloon launch with

each balloon carrying a child's name and a message. For the Thanksgiving Day worship service the church was filled to

overflowing for a beautiful celebration of God's faithfulness.



Photo: Courtesy TBCS
Thunder Bay Christian School rebuilt for 25th anniversary.

Dordt's social work program recognized

Robert VanderVennen

SIOUX CENTER, Iowa — The Dordt College social work program, leading to the degree of bachelor of social work (B.S.W.), has recently received accreditation by the Council on

Social Work Education, reports Beryl Hugen, director of the program.

The accreditation is based on a self-assessment prepared by the social work faculty, and an assessment visit made to the Dordt campus in April 1987, by a two-person team from the council. The initial accreditation is valid for a four-year period. Work toward accreditation began six years ago. Dordt's social work program currently enrolls 41 students.

Accreditation will benefit the students by making it easier for them to get jobs after graduation, and by reducing study for the master's degree in social work from two years to one, says Prof. Hugen.

Award for outstanding service

Dordt's social work program

Because of the powerful influence of formal instruction, a deliberately integrated Christian education is essential for the well-being of children within our community of faith and at the same time, their commitment and training strengthens the community in its very existence and mission.

Christ is not an *option* for Christian living and, therefore, not optional for a truly Christian education: Christ is the *foundation* for all Christian building of faith, behaviour and lifestyles.

William Kruger, Principal, Rockway Mennonite Christian School, Kitchener, Ontario.

recently was honoured by an award from Governor Terry Bradshaw for outstanding volunteer service to the state of Iowa. The award recognized the work of eight social work students and their instructor, Fred De Jong, who researched the needs of low-income and elderly people in 13 northwest Iowa counties.

"Call for Students — Classis Chatham"

Any student from Classis Chatham who is studying for full-time ministry in the CRC and is in need of financial assistance for the coming academic year is asked to request application forms from Secretary Nick Overduin, 182 Centre St., St. Thomas, ON N5R 3A4. The completed application form must be in the Secretary's hands by Feb. 15, 1988, or the application will not be processed. Also, first-time applicants should reserve the evening of Mar. 7, 1988, for an interview with the committee.

CLASSIS CHATHAM STUDENT FUND COMMITTEE
Secretary Nick Overduin
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For the time being...

Adrian Peetoom



My work takes me to New York about four times each year. We all know about New York, right? Noisy and dirty, pot holes in the streets, Central Park muggings, Broadway glitter, Wall Street power, St. Patrick's idolatry, impossible airports. And even if you avoid all that, there is no escaping a transportation problem — you're caught between a rock (New York's notorious subway) and a hard place (New York's infamous cab drivers). New York just doesn't add up to Toronto, or Iron Springs, Alberta, for instance!

So here are two New York stories for you, to do with what you will.

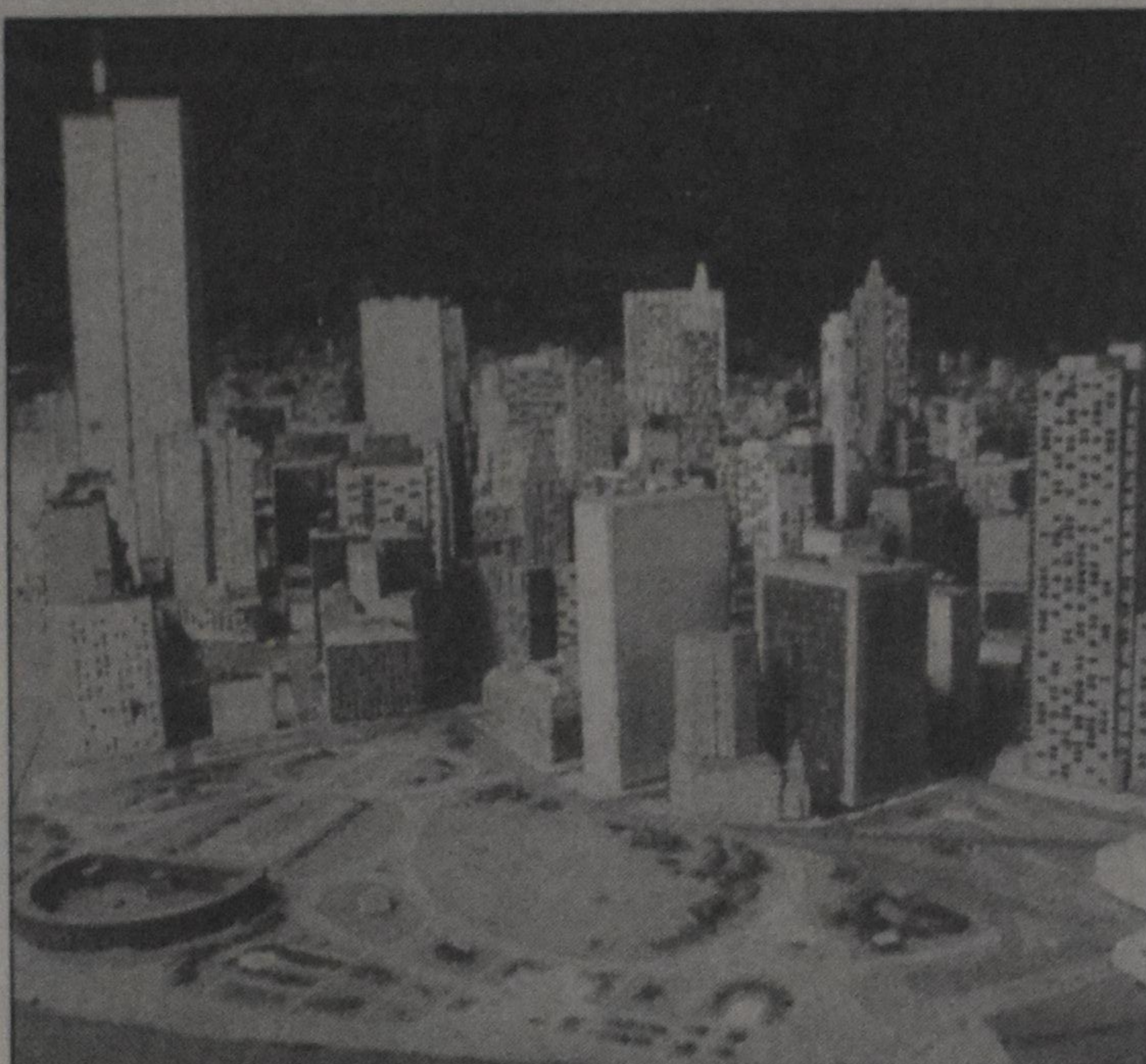
Apprehension in a taxi

The first happened a few years ago. About 4 p.m. on a Friday afternoon I had to catch a cab in Manhattan to get to

LaGuardia airport, a daunting task with about one million other people trying to get away to their own destinations at the same time. I don't remember whether I actually ran over a little old lady, muscled an aging rabbi out of the way, or smashed an elbow into the ribs of another businessman, but somehow I found myself in the back seat of a cab on my merry way. And my driver was a woman; large, very large, and black, very black.

Now I "sort of" knew the way to the airport. Sort of, for the city has enough tunnels and bridges to confuse even natives. At first the cab stopped-and-started the conventional twists and turns that got us to a giant bridge, filled with solid lines of cars, cabs and buses, all moving in the same — my — direction. But suddenly the cab made a sharp turn to the right, cut in front of what seemed to be

Prejudice in New York



the biggest truck I had ever seen, and dove down a ramp right off the bridge again. I looked up, suddenly alarmed. I could not see the driver's eyes in the mirror, but the tension in her neck and shoulders was obvious. She swung to the right, once more to the left. I found myself in streets I had not seen before, streets I would not have chosen to be in, streets lined with burned out and ravaged warehouses, boarded up stores and restaurants, and rubble I knew could only be found in New York — or maybe Chicago.

And precisely at that moment my eyes did catch the eyes of the driver. We stared at each other for a moment, and then she said, "Are you scared?" All I could do was nod, for my mouth and my throat felt constricted. "You don't have to be," she said, "this is a shortcut through Queen's to the airport. It's a bit longer, but faster this time of night. I won't charge you any more than normal."

Only then did she smile, and I felt my body relax some in

response. Not much later the landscape improved, and soon after we found ourselves back on a familiar bridge, and eventually at the airport, well in time for my flight. In the meantime we had a conversation; that is, I asked some questions and she told me the story of her life: she had come from Jamaica, been deserted by a husband and left with three children (two married now) and a troublesome teenager still at home; she had first hated but now loved driving a cab ("it makes me feel independent and I make a good living"); she had heard Toronto was a beautiful city and she'd come and visit some time, and that Canadians were good tipplers.

I gave her the biggest tip I have ever given any cab driver anywhere. What else could I do? Actually, come to think of it, I have never had a New York cab driver cheat me, and that includes the drive of a late-night limousine (57 metres long with TV and bar) who opened the door and said, "Pay me what you think I'm worth!" So much for *that* prejudice.

I continued using cabs after that, even though they also charge you for standing still in New York traffic, and they stand still a lot.

Second misconception evaporates

My second story has to do with subways. Last August I was booked in a hotel on a specific subway line with specific instructions as to how to use it. The people who sponsored my visit made no allowances for cab fares, but did for two subway tokens each day. So I used that mode of transportation, with trepidation the first day, but with increasing delight each day thereafter. So, when on a recent visit I had the choice of lodging and transport, I stayed at the same hotel, and explored the subway for much different travels, some of which included changes of trains underneath Times Square. I loved it! The trains were clean and fast. The stations were older than Toronto's to be sure, but actually more interesting, with traces of a grander past visible everywhere. The people smiled, and coped with rush hour overloading in as cheerful a manner as one could expect. One evening a four-piece jazz band blew its heart out on a platform. People bought flowers from vendors everywhere, and there was no arguing the cost and speed, as compared to taxis.

Second prejudice gone. I wonder whether New York will educate me even more on future visits. Could it be (nah, it couldn't!), could it be that some day I'll meet a person with a soul on Wall Street? Or an actress with morals on Broadway? Nah, it couldn't. But then

Adrian Peetoom is an education writer and senior editor of Scholastic Books.

If God should go on strike

It's just a good thing God above
has never gone on strike
because He wasn't treated fair
or there were things He didn't like.
If He had ever once sat down
and said, "That's it — I'm through!
I've had enough of those on earth,
so this is what I'll do:

"I'll give my orders to the sun:
'Cut off your heat supply.'
And to the moon: 'Give no more light';
and run those oceans dry.
Then, just to make it tough
and put the pressure on,
turn off the air and oxygen
'till every breath is gone."

Do you know He'd be justified,
if fairness were the game?
For no one has been more abused
or treated with disdain
than God — and yet He carries on:
supplying you and me
with all the favours of His grace,
and everything for free.

Folks say they want a better deal
and so on strike they go;
but what a deal we've given God
to whom our hearts we owe.
We don't care who we hurt or harm
to gain the things we like;
but what a mess we'd all be in
if God should go on strike.

(author unknown)

Submitted by J. Kemper, Hamilton, Ontario.

Redeemer College

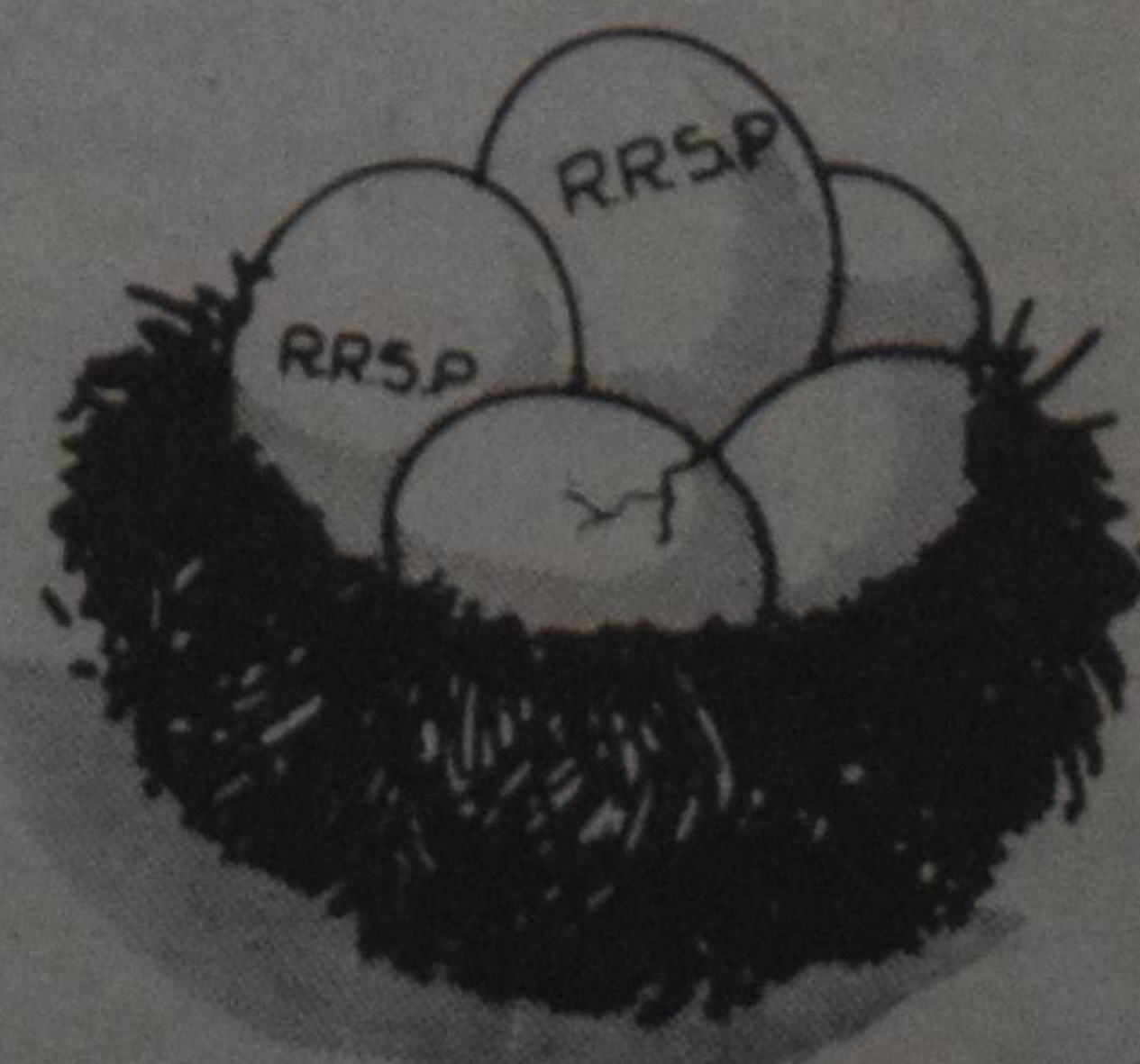
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Review

Canadian hymn writer one of this century's best

Margaret Clarkson, *A Singing Heart*. Carol Stream, Ill.: Hope Publishing Co., 1987. 203 p.: paperback, \$9.95 U.S. Reviewed by Marian Van Til.

Margaret Clarkson, 72, is an engaging, articulate woman. (I had the pleasure of meeting her and sitting in on her seminar at the 1986 Hymn Society of America convention.) But much more than that, this Toronto native stands almost alone in our time as an evangelical hymn writer in the classic sense. It's unfortunate there are not more like her.

Her poems are rhymed and traditionally structured so that they lend themselves, whether gentle, forceful, ecstatic, or pained, are one: they are full of hope in a sovereign God, through a Saviour who claims all of life as his own.

A Singing Heart is the anthology of Clarkson's complete hymn texts — texts she has written from 1946 to the present.

In an introduction entitled, "The Making of a Hymn Writer," Clarkson explains why she writes hymns: "I never cherished any ambition to become a writer, much less a hymn writer, but something inside has compelled me to write from as far back as I can remember. To put things down

in writing has always met an inner need for me. From the age of ten when I broke into print with my first poem, I published in one way or another in a slow, steady trickle — only verse at first, then essays, articles and eventually, books. I wrote my first Christian song at my pastor's request when I was thirteen or fourteen; he used it in an evening service. Thereafter I wrote songs intermittently, a few of which were published during my teens, but I did not concentrate on songs; I wrote in many fields. It never occurred to me to try to write a hymn — I held hymns in too high respect to aspire to that. I'm glad I didn't try to write in this most demanding genre too soon."

She tells how her early love of music and literature came through being given her own hymnal at age seven or eight, and through memorizing scripture: "At home my dearest delight was to climb to the topmost boughs of the old cherry tree in our backyard, hymnbook in hand, there to sing to my heart's content, exulting in the treasure trove to which I now had unlimited access." After she learned to play the piano, she appreciated them in a new, even deeper way. She found that the petitions and praises of the hymnists expressed her own



Photo: Priscilla B. Reimer
Margaret Clarkson, internationally known Canadian hymn writer, as she appeared Oct. 26, 1987, at a Toronto festival featuring her hymns.

aspirations better than she could articulate them herself. It is to our delight and benefit that she did learn to articulate those feelings.

Clarkson's early empathy for hymns — her experience of them as salve for a wounded spirit or praise which words alone cannot express — has undoubtedly influenced her own writing. She says, "I have used hymns ... to help me counteract life's stresses, for there is hardly a life situation but has its analogue in the writings of one or another of the pilgrim saints of God."

However, Clarkson does not see hymns as merely the pious expression of individual Christians. Her sense of the communion of the saints developed — also during childhood — in an amusingly simple way. Her hymnal contained names and dates of the hymn writers (as virtually all hymnals do). As she leafed through that hymnal during church services, occupying her fidgety self during the weekly 45-minute sermons, she soon

Regents of our Lord and Saviour

"In Christ's stead." (2 Corinthians 5:20)

Regents of our Lord and Saviour,
let us now his glory sing,
lay our lives in love before him,
worship Christ, our risen King;
to him raise through all our days
our living psalms of holy praise.

Christ is king in earth and heaven,
we're his regents here below;
may our lives declare his glory
in our world of sin and woe!
Lord, be shown through all your own
till every heart is yours alone!

Live in us, O risen Savior!
Witness through us hour by hour;
Words made flesh, be known and worshiped
as we prove your Spirit's power!
Speak your grace to every race
through us, your regents in this place!

Honor, glory, praise and blessing
be to him who lives and reigns;
all we are and have and hope for
his alone while breath remains!
Lord, renew and keep us true
and faithful to our trust from you!

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Meter: 8.7.8.7.8.7.
Tune: PRAISE, MY SOUL

"This was written in Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1979 as a hymn for Regent College, where I taught a course in Hymnology in 1979 and again in 1981.

Note that, in using the John Gross tune PRAISE, MY SOUL (LAUDA ANIMA), this hymn requires different phrasing in the last two lines (8.7.8.7.7.8.)."

What is this richness?

(ALCHEMY)

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those that love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

What is this richness,
fulness of blessing,
sense of God's presence
wondrously near?
What is this sunlight
beaming upon me,
piercing my darkness,
stilling my fear?

Where are the shadows
lately around me,
where are the heartaches
not understood?
This is God's promise —
he is in all things,
silently planning,
working my good!

Working his purpose —
joy in earth's sorrow;
all his good pleasure —
peace in earth's pain:
praise to the Savior,
sovereign Recycler,
working through all things
heavenly gain!

When I worship God

"If you love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

When I worship God I tell him that I love him,
that I love him, that I love him;
when I worship God I tell him that I love him,
then God is glad, and so am I.

If I really do love God, then I'll obey him,
I'll obey him, I'll obey him;
if I really do love God, then I'll obey him,
then he'll be glad, and so will I.

If I do what Jesus tells me, I'm his helper,
I'm his helper, I'm his helper;
if I do what Jesus tells me, I'm his helper,
then he is glad, and so am I.

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Meter: 12.8.12.8.
Tune: WHEN I WORSHIP GOD (Clarkson)

"David C. Cook Publishing Company's Sunday School editors had asked me to write some songs for little children. This one, words and music, was written on the Severn River one morning in 1975 (literally, in a boat — I could hardly get home fast enough to write it down!). It first appeared in *Creative Teaching Aids*, 1977."

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Meter: 5.5.5.4.D.
Tune: BUNESSAN

"I wrote these words in Toronto, Ontario, in 1978."

began to trace the hymns of her favourite writers. That led her to search for their other writings. Thus she came to know and love John Bunyan, John and Charles Wesley, Martin Luther, Isaac Watts and many others. She came to realize that the hymns and writers she loved were scattered throughout the centuries "from the dawn of Christianity right up to the present." That knowledge had a profound effect. She began "to see the church in heaven and the church on earth as one continuous, living stream of the grace of God in which [she] too had a place." When Clarkson left home at age 20, she sought out a church "where good hymns as well as good preaching ministered" to her.

All this prepared her well for the work God had for her: joining the ranks of those hymn writers past, present and future who are part of his living church.

In a second, short introductory essay Clarkson suggests that good hymns have six general characteristics:

- they are God-centred; ("looking upwards, not inwards.")
- they are doctrinal in content and theologically sound; ("The doctrine of good hymns is neither myopic nor overblown, but true to the Word of God and the experience of the average believer.")
- they have words of beauty, dignity, reverence, and

simplicity. ("They are never glib, never pat, never extravagant, never trite: they are always true.") — they are adult in word and tone. ("They do not insult intelligence by requiring us to sing immortal truths in childish or unsuitable modes of expression, or to sloppy, sentimental tunes. Their figures of speech will be in keeping with the worth-ship of God")

— they display precision and finesse of poetic technique and expression. ("They will have a single theme and organic unity. Rhymes and rhythms are interesting, original and correct. [They] should be short enough to be sung in their entirety, in order that the full impact of their sequence may be experienced.")

— they turn the heart heavenward. ("They rejoice in the unity of believers and the communion of the saints.")

Clarkson ends the essay by posing the question: "Do you wonder that I find hymn writing the most difficult thing I've ever attempted? These standards, impossible as they are, are the goals I must strive to reach."

As the examples on this page attest, she has done an excellent job of attaining those goals.

New Year

Standing on the verge of the unknown
by flawless-clear new road
memories carved in pages of the past
come tumbling out of time.

"Dear, Lord, what shall it be?
'Pastures green,' or need storms
of darkness obscure my way
while seasons retreat in time?"

Earth's high hills and deep valleys
flourish on rains from above.
How much would frost-bracing winds kill
but for the stern, rugged, high slopes?

New Year

God's hills are protection divine
for His people against their foes
it is the hill of difficulty
that drives us near His throne.

He who knows best in kindness guides.
So, whether on hill top fair and high
or in the valley where trials crush hearts
what matters? God is there!

Now lies a new year to possess
pure, unblemished and unscarred.
How will you chart this year's course?
The choice is in your heart.

Gertie Pool,
Matsqui, British Columbia



People on our way

Jacoba Bos

As 1987 has drawn to a close
and we reflect on the year's
events, we can be thankful for
many things.

One thing stands out; it is the
blessing of having people
around us who have made our
journey here more joyful —
people who have helped carry
our grief and weariness, and
shared our joy and laughter:

There is the woman who
brought a meal to the home of a
family whose members were
trying to cope with serious
illness and who simply lacked
the time and energy to prepare a
meal.

There was the clerk at the
supermarket checkout who, at
the end of a tiring day, still
cheerfully went to the back of
the store to pick up a forgotten
bag of milk.

There was the telephone call
when we least expected it.
Hearing that voice was like
summer rain falling on parched
ground.

There was the woman whose
smile said, "I care for you,"
and the brother in Christ who in
a simple way witnessed for his
Lord, and so comforted his
dying friend.

These were "every day"
people who, in their own way,

ministered to us. Mostly
unaware of the good they were
doing, they went the second
mile.

As we reflect on the year that
is past, let us thank God for the
people on our way. Let us look
forward to meeting many more
of them in the new year. For
until our race is run and our
journey done, God will send
people to help us along the way.

*Jacoba Bos is a writer living in Strathroy,
Ontario.*

God of the ages

God of the ages,
history's Maker,
planning our pathway,
holding us fast,
shaping in mercy
all that concerns us:
Father, we praise you,
Lord of the past!

God of this morning,
gladly your children
worship before you,
trustingly bow;
teach us to know you
always among us,
quietly sovereign —
Lord of our now.

God of tomorrow,
strong Overcomer,
princes of darkness
own your command:
what, then, can harm us?
we are your people,
now and forever
kept by your hand.

Lord of past ages,
Lord of this morning,
Lord of the future,
help us, we pray:
teach us to trust you,
love you, obey you,
crown you each moment
Lord of today!

Margaret Clarkson

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(See C.C. Books page for a review of the anthology of
hymn texts from which this was taken.)

I buried the year

I buried the year with its fellows,
The year I had loved so well;
I buried it deep,
Where the other years sleep;
I laid it to rest where it fell.

I buried the year with its sorrows,
't is well to forget the ill;
I buried its tears,
Its sins and its fears.
Its follies, its wrongs, its ill-wills.

I buried the year, and above it
Erected a cross, to recall
The Saviour who died,
And the sin-cleansing tide
Atoning and covering all.

I buried the year, but on turning
I found a new offspring of Time
Was born at my feet,
And with innocence sweet
Was ready my glad knees to climb.

I took the New Year with rejoicing,
And ask for the grace and the love
To train it aright,
For the Kingdom of light,
The home in the heavens above.

William Luff
(Calvinist Contact, January, 1959)

I have a sin of fear that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
Swear by thyself that at my death, thy Sun
Shall shine as it shines now, and heretofore;
And having done that, thou hast done,
I have no more.
Hymn to God the Father by John Donne

Feature

Honduras: the struggle for democracy

Frank Sawyer

Clearly Central America is a region in crisis: economic, social, political crisis. Many features are common to the region taken more or less as a whole, such as the colonial history, a hierarchy of power, dictatorships, frustrated reforms, revolutions, poverty and the weighty influence of U.S. foreign policy and the multinationals.

El Salvador

Within the Central American nations there is also much variety. For example, El Salvador, the most densely populated, has undergone periodic blood baths with a polarization between left wing guerrillas against the military and the right wing death squads. Traditionally an oligarchy network of 14 families controlled 60 per cent of the land. The system depends on coffee and U.S. aid to survive.

Guatemala

Consider Guatemala: although economically better off than many of its neighbours, the pure-blooded Indians who make up half the population average less than \$100 income each year. Should this statistic (the best I could find) have improved slightly the last year or two, it plainly remains gut-shaking. Since the U.S.A. (CIA) planned *golpe del estado* (coup) in 1954, to end land reform which affected the United Fruit Banana Company, thousands have been tortured and killed in the conflict between the peasants and the oligarchy. The army, trained and beefed-up for some decades by the U.S., is the major force in the country, leaving little room for reform.

Costa Rica

Costa Rica is different from much of the region. There you find a large measure of literacy, a longer pattern of democracy, more social equity. What, we should therefore ask, contributed to this "model" Central American nation? It seems that the smaller Indian population prevented the formation of a large marginalized class along racial lines; the land was better divided among the Spanish settlers; the government has increasingly kept the notably small army out of politics; public funding has gone into education; the traditional stability has encouraged investment.

Nicaragua

Then there is Nicaragua, sick of the Somoza dictatorship and seeking socialist change. The 1979 revolution was nationalist and Marxist. It was a popular uprising with the support of various groups within the country; the present government has been legitimized by election. Only the coming years will tell if it is to remain and increasingly become democratic-pluralistic.

The great shock to foreign policy is that the support of right wing dictatorships (authoritarian facism) can *help cause* a swing to the left through a nationalist-Marxist revolution, with a threat that the final result will be totalitarian communism.

But at present Nicaragua is socialist with a mixed economy and a large measure of liberty to preach and teach, as our missionaries have continued to do there, myself included. Clearly Nicaragua is experimenting with socialism because the U.S.-supported

is so close to facism and prefers the use of violence rather than to recognize the great injustices clear to even the most cautious observer? Clear to those of us who also recognize the threat of Marxist ideological dominance. Can government corruption and a system that avoids reform never be changed without revolt?

This is the setting: inevitable revolutions. But what about Honduras?

Honduras

Honduras, "the depths," so named by Columbus after escaping the depths of a storm at sea, off the coast, knows many depths indeed. This classic "banana republic" has yet to show that social justice is *res publica* (a public matter, the root of the word republic). At present Honduras is the quiet

for literacy up North.

- 20 per cent are unemployed; another 40 per cent are affected adversely by sub-employment (day labourers who depend on seasonal work). Per capita income is \$800 a year!

- The population of four-and-one-half million is expected to reach seven million around the year 2000.

- While there is considerable freedom of expression, political assassinations, disappearances, torture have not been fully eradicated.

Democracy

Party politics in Honduras does not focus on national unity and progressive reforms. Politics is characterized by personal power (the Spanish *macho* ideal; the *caudillo* or *casique* mentality) and by party power. In the past the armed

mandatory.

If the above remains a blindspot in U.S. foreign policy, the escalation of the problems are certain. How

I'm waiting for the church to prophesy

Electronic evangelism is an embarrassment. I'm sure to the sending embassy while the hi-tech sales technique is soothsaying its thousands. I'm waiting for the dead in Christ to rise and shine in a different modus vivendi. In fact I'm waiting for the social gospel and the fundies to recycle the pulpit pulp we've found on our churchstep for a whole century and announce a rebirth of reformation.

Yes indeed I'm waiting for a Christian political party to prophesy about the vietnamization of El Salvador and Guatemala. I'm religiously waiting for the president and all transnational corporate corruption to swear on the Bible to speak the whole truth for once and tell us what is happening under the and why the armies and their guns made in the USA are slaughtering whole villages of Indian peasants.

You see I'm waiting for the confession that to pay subversives is wrong to presidentially antidemocratically snub the World Court is wrong and to pretend that Nicaragua is the problem is hypocritically wrong on the part of somocistas and the mercenary contras.

As you can imagine I'm still waiting for a true election in which the army doesn't point their guns made in the USA at peasants and tell them how to vote. In fact I'm waiting for the poor majority to outvote the oligarchy and vote back land to the tiller, alphabetization for all and not find their tortured bodies along the road a week later for after the national anthem the armies should head back to their barracks.

For all this and more I am waiting a new confession and the Joelesque arrival of prophecy in whatever language that can explain the writing on the wall: the long ignored graffiti and barbaric ways of civil religion gone to the dogs especially the pitbull oligarchy the *dolores* of dollars and dictators.

After the aftermath and we figure out the crash of our luck with Moloch and the selfcritical crystallization of the temple, the temple, the temple we shall no longer play hide and go seek but we shall seek and find.

Frank Sawyer
Tegucigalpa, Honduras



Shantytowns expand in Honduras as people come to the city looking for work.

Somoza dynasty denied reform toward social justice.

The future?

It seems that the important thing for U.S. foreign policy to learn is that there is a great need for social justice in Central America, where millions are impoverished, illiterate, live a day-to-day, malnourished subsistence existence. Supplying weapons, beefing up the national guards, a deeper military involvement, is NOT what is needed. As John F. Kennedy said, "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible make violent revolution inevitable."

As the old regimes based on the landowning oligarchy are increasingly challenged, is violent revolution inevitable? Will there be an ongoing spiral of conflict? Will the illiteracy and the poverty increase with population growth? Can land reform, education, health care, come only by way of socialist uprising? Is this socialism worse than the bankrupt liberal-capitalism that at times

"eye of the Central American storm." To some degree, its identity can be defined in what it lacks: Honduras does not have the educational development of Costa Rica; it has no social revolution like Nicaragua; nor does one find the violent polarization of El Salvador or Guatemala. Honduras is curiously peaceful, inert in her poverty (the poorest country in the Western hemisphere after Haiti).

Honduras is dominantly Mestizo, neither truly Indian nor truly Spanish. And there is indeed a quiet democratic process underway; yet, the right to vote means little without social justice: jobs, bread, healthcare, literacy. Is the "eye of the storm" really a time-bomb?

Appalling statistics

In Honduras ...

- 50 - 70 per cent of the population live in poverty and are affected by malnutrition.
- 50 per cent are illiterate. More if one maintains the standard

forces have had to intervene several times in order to stabilize the political chaos. The armed forces are the main power bloc in the country. But since 1982 an attempt has been made to maintain the electoral process.

A truer expression of democracy must still be reached: namely social democracy, economic democracy, educational democracy. In one phrase: social justice.

The deeply entrenched poverty, illiteracy, the lack of jobs, malnutrition — these all point to a great social crisis which must not be ignored, neither in Honduran civic affairs nor in U.S. foreign policy. And indeed, it is no help to also have a regional crisis with external pressure for military build-up, when internally Honduras is so weak.

Ever since the recession of the world economy, the possibility of social reform has been hampered even more, yet because of this recession and inflation, is all the more

ironic that weapons provided to national guards (guardians of the peace? or guardians of the oligarchy's privileges?) may one day be used to force a social revolution! The gringo-go-home attitude is quite understandable when the influence of foreign policy, the CIA, and the multinationals have not led to social democracy but more often than not hindered the needed changes of land reform, taxation of companies and provided guns and training for national guards rather than the needed emphasis on technology, education for all, agricultural projects, better trade agreements and peace-making settlements not only with the status-quo seekers, but also with those who struggle for transformation.

Factors in the crisis

What are the factors that block reformation in Honduras?

- The lack of a strong *economic base*. The rich do not always re-invest in their own country but are orientated toward Europe and Miami. Taxes do not attempt to even out some of the pyramid-like extremes of wealth and poverty.

- The lack of job skills and a *technological base*.

- Foreign investment*/multinational manipulation. Foreign interest has blocked land reform and the organization of labour, as has the oligarchy within the country. A larger share of the profits from foreign investment must remain in Honduras itself.

- There is a serious *lack of roads* in some parts of the country that prevents the marketing of local crops, thus closing off job opportunities.

- Education* does not reach the whole population. Only the wealthy receive adequate

training (which ensures them of a privileged position).

- Psychologically* there is much inertia, a fatalism which has never seen improvement and, therefore, neither expects it nor seeks it.

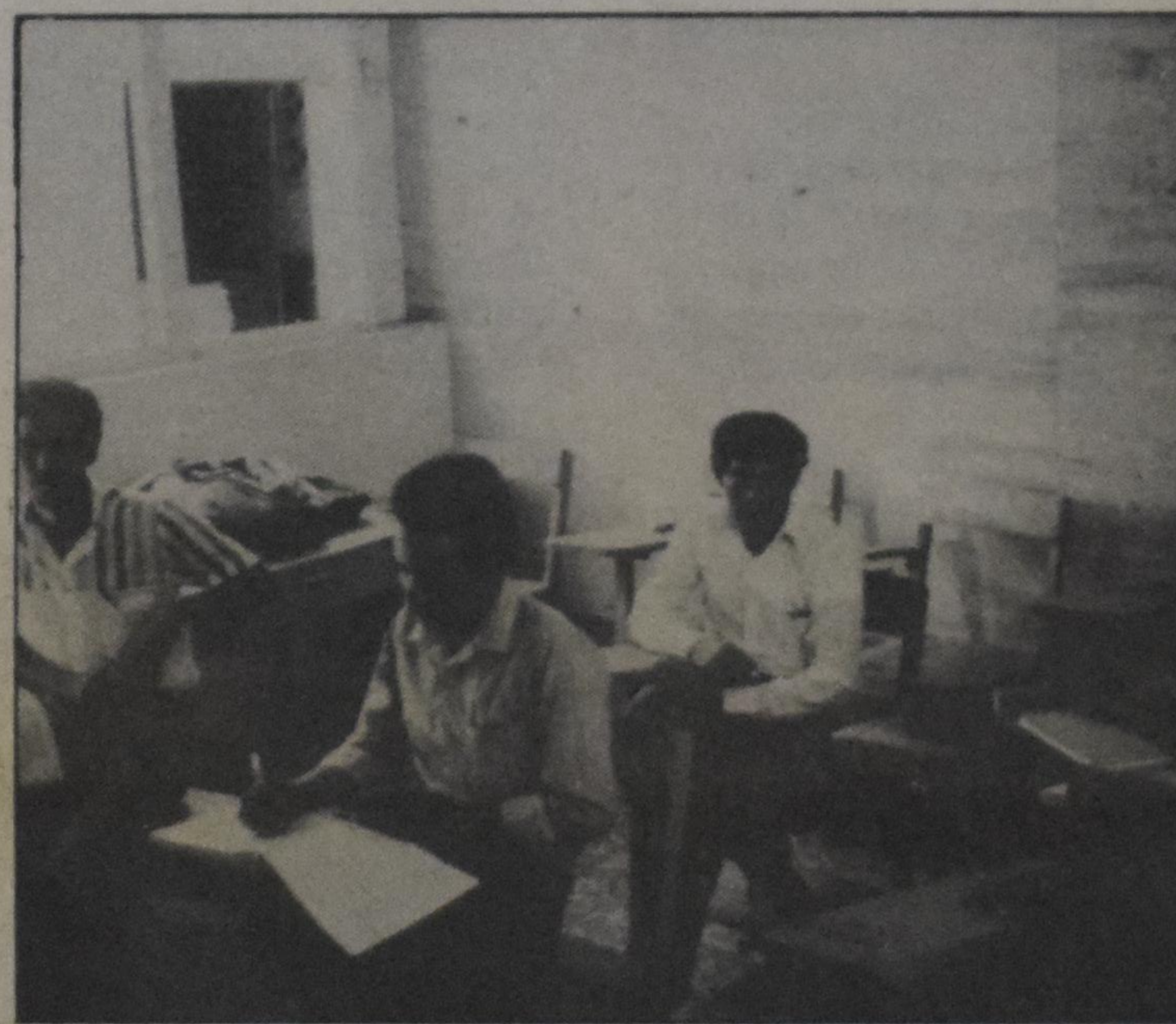
- Politically* there is corruption; power and money are not channelled toward reform.

- Family ethics* are in bad shape: a man will commonly have two or three sets of children with alternate women. This ensures much poverty since he will not support any of them well, if at all.

- Religiously*, the traditional church did not teach the people to read (nor has the government), nor did it promote social



Top picture: simple means of transportation are used in Honduras — a donkey carrying a few sheaves of reed; bottom left: an oxen-drawn cart moves fence posts; bottom right: students at the Open Reformed Theological Seminary prepare for a lecture.



transformation. The evangelicals in their mission work have often been so individualistic or even "dispensational" that their social, public, communal witness has been very minimal.

We who have been sent as missionaries of Christian Reformed World Missions (CRWM) and Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) are

eager to go according to the great commission of Jesus Christ our Lord: teaching the nations to obey all that He has commanded. (Mt. 28:20) *All* that Christ has commanded includes worship, work, family life, social mercy, political justice.

There are indeed signs of an awakening in Honduras:

- More people than ever

before are reading the Bible. Indeed, some are learning to read by using the Bible.

- International development projects are helping meet some basic needs such as water, electricity, orphanages, education.

- The democratic process is being tried.

- There is increasing conscientization toward social justice.

The evangelization of the political sphere, the calling upon the government to hear the Word of the Lord for justice, the conversion of the power of the rich into paths of righteousness, is at least as important as the conversion of the power of the poor into a reform movement.

But the challenge is great: the forces of *caudillismo*; the oligarchy obnoxiously biting into their privileges like a bull terrier; the malnutrition; the illiteracy; the religious cristo-

paganism and out-to-lunch evangelicals; the blind spots in international pressure to militarize the region

The struggle for democracy must go on. Not really just democracy. The power of 50 per cent plus one does not mean much. But *social* democracy, *economic* democracy, *educational* democracy do mean something. And the struggle for *justice and mercy*: these indeed are part of the struggle of faith.

Frank Sawyer is a missionary for the Christian Reformed Church in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Photos: Frank Sawyer



Student pastors draw a crowd of children as they sing hymns, accompanied by guitars and tambourine.

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Feature

Eppinga's slide show brings standing ovation

Carol-Ann Veenkamp

It's inevitable; your friends have been abroad; they've taken lots of slides; they invite you over for coffee and you end up watching slides all night. But because you've previously overdosed on home slide shows, you take your cue. When the lights go out — so do you.

So when Rev. Jacob Eppinga, silhouetted against an eight by eight foot screen, announced his intention to take an audience of 200 to Europe via a slide show at the recent Institute for Christian Studies' (ICS) inspirational evening in Toronto, a polite assembly inwardly groaned.

But this show was a surprise. Eppinga, a retired minister and 19-year veteran columnist for *The Banner*, the weekly publication of the Christian Reformed Church, drew a standing ovation after his final picture.

A wordsmith by trade, Eppinga chose to depict his recent trip abroad through narration alone. The only photographs the audience saw were those he painted with words.

Upon retirement from the pastorate of LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the congregation presented the Eppingas with tickets for a voyage on the Queen Elizabeth II from New York to the port of Southampton, England. However, Eppinga noted dryly that the tickets were one-way and that the ship was in dry dock for repairs at the time.

Of clerical collars and canes

The show began with an imaginary slide picturing Eppinga, wearing his clerical collar, and his wife, wielding a cane, at the airport. He said his wife wasn't happy about having to use a cane until they were allowed to board the plane first with the very young, very old, and the infirm.

His collar came in handy too, he said, for in Ireland everyone mistook him for a priest — that is until his wife joined him.

Then the looks of respect changed to those of suspicion.

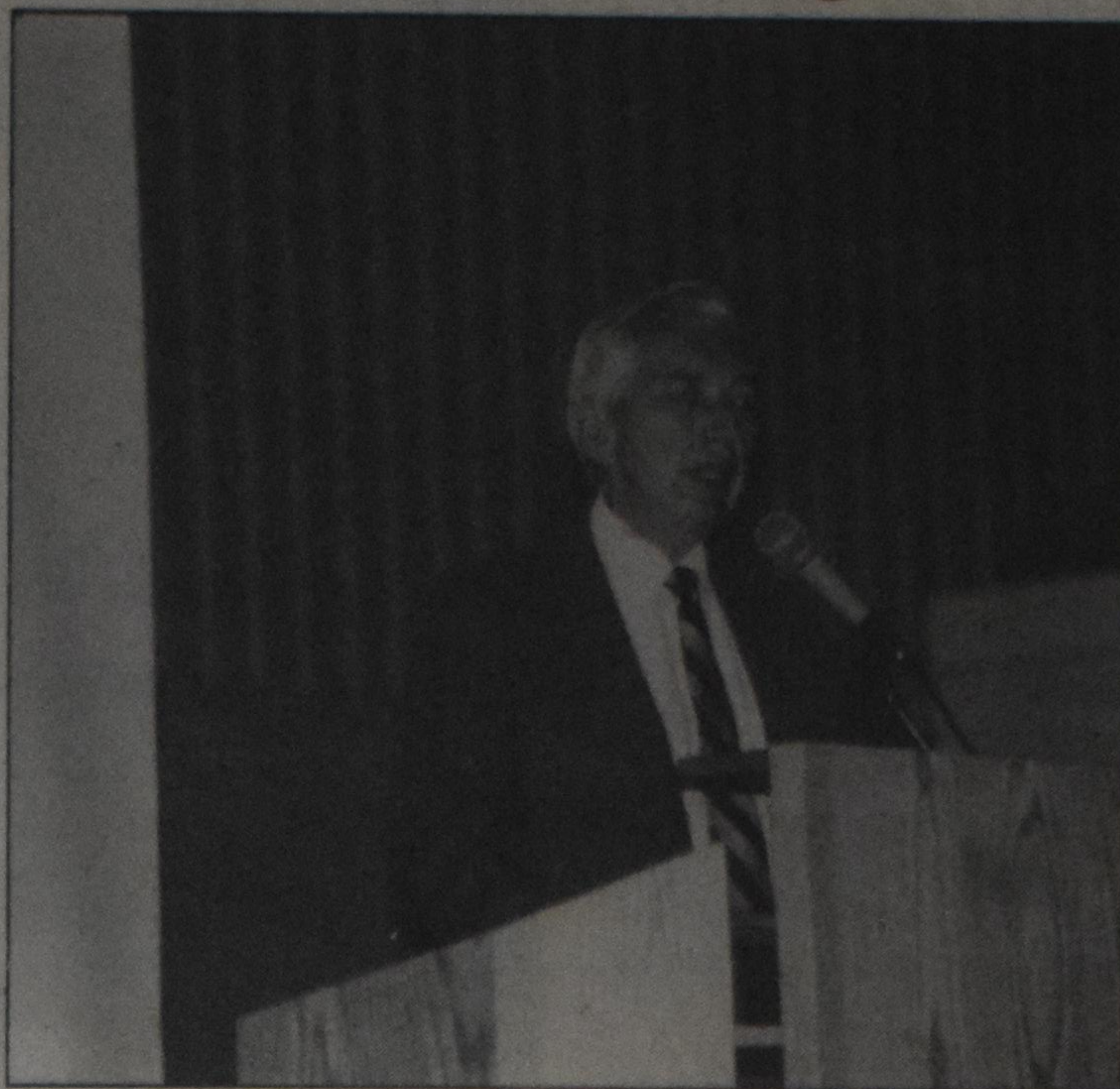
Eppinga conceded that he behaves very well towards strangers while wearing his clerical collar because people immediately identify him with the body of Christ. He surmised that if all Christians could be recognized by the clothes they wear, we might all be a lot nicer than we sometimes are.

"Slide 2" showed the Eppingas travelling through Harlem (New York) in a taxi. Around them the buildings are boarded up; there are derelicts, drug addicts, alcoholics, and prostitutes, contrasted with people wearing \$1,000 furs and suits. Eppinga said he couldn't help but think of Sodom; and again when they visited Piccadilly Circus in London where they saw the "Praise Satan" slogans worn on T-shirts. Amsterdam also seemed particularly open to evil, he noted.

"In the taxi I felt very self-righteous and judgmental," Eppinga said. But his attitude soon changed. "I have heard many sermons about the coming judgment and hell ... but maybe God would be more pleased if He heard more pleas on behalf of the cities of today." He underscored his point by referring to the biblical passage in which Abraham intercedes on behalf of Sodom. (Genesis 18)

Of kidney stones and ships

In the third "slide" we see Eppinga on his hands and knees on board the Queen Elizabeth II. But he is not pleading for the lost cities of our world. Rather, he is recovering from treatment for a kidney stone attack which has



Flanked by an eight by eight foot slide screen, Rev. J.D. Eppinga of "Of Cabbages and Kings" fame, gives a slide show second to none.

left him feeling as if he had been mugged and kicked in the back.

After five "wonderful" days and nights aboard the floating hotel, Eppinga next took his audience to Scotland, one of five countries he was to visit, including Wales, England, The Netherlands and Friesland, he quipped. Those up on Dutch geography and politics know that Friesland is a province of The Netherlands which has always considered itself autonomous.

In Scotland the Eppingas were invited to stay at the home of a man who met them at the train station. At first, Eppinga said, they thought the Scot was just being extremely hospitable. But they soon discovered his home to be a bed and breakfast place with a price tag.

Over breakfast there they met a Dutch couple and found themselves trapped into a discussion about rifts in Dutch Protestantism, something Eppinga wished to avoid. So he turned the conversation to his hometown of Detroit, Michigan, only to find out that his host had taught navigation in Detroit and Chatham, Ontario, during the Second World War and had also participated in emergency food drops over The Netherlands during those years.

Of elfin women and prayer

In the fourth "slide," we see the Eppingas feeling their way down the dark unfamiliar streets of a Welsh town; he is burdened with all their luggage. Against his wife's advice to wait until the next day to set out for the Welsh resort, Eppinga decided they would journey forth. But they missed a train and arrived after most people had retired for the evening. A friendly train conductor told them to head down to Number 7, located on a side street, if they hoped to find accommodation for the night.

Having no option but to trust the conductor, the Eppingas found the address and rang the door bell of the darkened house. Immediately the lights came on and an "elfin lady" threw open her arms and said, "Your room is waiting for you!"

Heartened by the warm reception, Eppinga turned to his wife who said, "You know, I prayed the whole way."

Eppinga's prime reason for wanting to visit Wales was to hear some of its famous male choruses. One Saturday evening they caught two performances. At one, the conductor asked the audience to tell which countries they represented. When the Eppingas said they were citizens of the United States, the chorus launched into the American national anthem. Eppinga said he was so surprised that he forgot to stand up!

The renowned veterinarian/author, Dr. James Herriot, is shown with The Eppingas in the fifth "slide." The good doctor was receiving visitors at his clinic the day the Eppingas arrived in Thurst and they waited in line with 200 other tourists to chat with him for a few minutes.

In 1970, the Eppingas lived in Cambridge while he attended Westminster College. They revisited the campus in the sixth "slide"; Eppinga reflected momentarily about the state of students in universities today, and expressed his gratitude for the existence of a Christian graduate school such as ICS.

In Friesland, The Netherlands, we find Eppinga in a newspaper shot. (This is "slide seven.") A Detroit Tigers fan from way back, Eppinga was trying to determine where his favourite team stood in the World Series. Earlier he'd talked to a fellow from Ontario who had informed him that the Toronto Blue Jays were three games

ahead of the Tigers. But in Friesland, Eppinga found a newspaper headlining the Tigers' victory. His subsequent celebrative whoop caused him to admit, "In Friesland I really made a fool of myself."

Of ducks and Dutch

A monetary gift from the LaGrave congregation allowed the Eppingas to take a leisurely cruise down the Dutch canals with 13 other passengers, all of whom turned out to be American. Eppinga alone could speak Dutch. So when one of the passengers asked him what the Dutch word for duck was, he replied, "eend," which is pronounced "aint."

"Ain't isn't a word," the inquirer responded. "No, it's a duck," he told her.

Another passenger on the canal tour boat turned out to be a Hollywood director. When he discovered that Eppinga was a minister, he confided that he was attempting to write a play about a man who had lost his faith, but he couldn't write the ending.

After talking awhile, Eppinga learned that the play was somewhat autobiographical, and that the director was going through a crisis of faith.

"I prayed, Lord, tell me what to say to this man," Eppinga said. And together they talked about the writings of C.S. Lewis, faith and their relationship with Jesus Christ.

Of television and witnessing

Eppinga pointed out that while recent events have made television evangelists subject to skepticism, the director had managed to hang onto his faith in part due to Billy Graham for whom he had directed two films.

The director told him this anecdote. It was Graham's custom to pray with the cast and crew before shooting began. He asked the director if he could have a few minutes to pray and did so. After Graham said "Amen," the director's call of "Lights, action!" was met with a power failure. Out of the eery darkness came Graham's voice, "I guess I had a bad connection!"

After telling that story, Eppinga mused that Graham's "true blue" faith had served as a witness to the troubled director.

"If we live what we believe and we are the only Bible the world reads, we may bring someone to the Lord by our lives," Eppinga concluded.

And, not needing to say more, he clicked off his imaginary slide projector.

Carol-Ann Veenkamp is the public relations person for the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto, Ontario.

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Story



Arie and Katrien

Katrien and I spent a pleasant weekend with our son and daughter-in-law, Jack and Alice, and their two lovely, lively children. They live in a town about 50 miles from the place of our abode and are members of a young church that saw the light of life about 10 years ago as an offshoot of another congregation.

After a tumultuous beginning, this church has — at last — its own brand-new building. On Sunday morning I, a retired carpenter, admired the architecture and layout of the small but functional church.

My wife and I will never forget the church service we attended when that young congregation had become the owners of a small old warehouse on the edge of town. It was an ugly square building, but with the help of many volunteers the inside had been made liveable and had been given the appearance of a church.

On that unforgettable Sunday the people were for the first time sitting on the church's own chairs. One of the parishioners, whose hobby it was to frequent auctions, had succeeded in purchasing 200 used folding chairs at \$1 a piece, and in gratitude for many blessings received had donated them all to his beloved church. That was indeed a noble gesture.

However, the giver had not been aware that at least 20 per cent of the chairs had lost their usefulness. They would have miserably failed a safety test for used chairs.

When we entered the church on that Sunday morning there had already been two casualties: two young men in the back had gone through their chairs and landed on the floor. Fortunately, only their pride was injured.

Our chairs held, although it was evident that they were not of the same quality as the sturdy Reformed doctrines proclaimed within the walls of that former warehouse. We hardly dared move.

What a difference!

Then, things began to resemble a battlefield. In front of me a young father took his place on a seat that promptly collapsed. With a bang he hit the ground, to the delight of his wife and two daughters. Left and right we heard the lugubrious sounds of breaking chairs and of untimely descending worshippers.

Those who had found a safe seat seemed to enjoy themselves greatly. Never had there been such hilarity in church. At last order was restored and the worship service could begin.

The pastor announced with an understanding smile that due to the unstable seating arrangements the audience was requested not to stand while singing, nor during certain other acts of worship.

The pastor was engaged in impressing The Ten Commandments upon his captive audience, when the door beside the pulpit opened and a latecomer appeared. The lady entering the church

instantly drew everyone's attention. She was one of the tallest, biggest, firmest and most formidable women I've ever cast a furtive eye on. She carried her 250-plus pounds with grace and dignity. The late King David would have without any hesitation identified her as the twin sister of his antagonist Goliath. With an apologetic smile she headed straight for the empty folding chair beside Katrien.

No one heard the remainder of The Commandments. Most were holding their breath. Even the minister looked disturbed and started repeating himself. "Thou shalt not kill-kill," he declared with a trembling voice, his eyes fixed on the impressive figure that had reached the vacant chair.

I attempted to warn the lady, but before I could say a word, she had passed us and commenced her descent upon the chair. In breathless silence she went down, down..., her considerable seat making contact with the chair's seat.

And then a miracle happened in a Reformed church! The chair did not collapse!

She was completely unaware of her unusual feat. The congregation breathed again and the pastor concluded the Ten Commandments.

About 20 minutes later, the lady beside Katrien and me gave in to the urge to consume a peppermint. She generously offered one to us and then took one herself. This she should not have done. Suddenly she started to choke; we heard her gasping and coughing. Her face turned a deep crimson and she looked as if she'd explode.

"Can I help you?" Katrien whispered. The woman did not respond, but made a warning gesture with her left hand, which we interpreted correctly. Hastily we stood up and made room for her as she hurried to the exit.

Since the building was small and the walls were thin, all worshippers could clearly hear the victim loudly coughing and barking, followed by the toilet

flushing. Nobody listened to the pastor. For good measure, the lady blew her nose, a trumpet-like blast.

Not inclined to miss the message of the morning, she opened the door again and walked to her seat with a smile of relief. Once more one could feel the suspense as she approached the chair. Katrien and I stood up to let her pass. She eased herself down, but not easily enough. Craaash!

That incident is one reason the members of that young church so appreciate their new building! Its solid, comfortable pews give them a much-needed sense of security.

Arie



My neighbour

My neighbour died this afternoon of cancer; she suffered long, thank God she had no pain; I've prayed for her these last two weeks with fervor; she knew of this, I trust it was not in vain.

I would so dearly loved to have had some conversation about her love for God, that she had peace with Him, but every time I crossed the threshold of her doorway, some other visitor was sitting in her den.

The last time I was there I made an effort, "Dear Jean, you do not have to go alone, reach out your hand, He knows it's yours that needs Him; He's yearning, and oh, Jean, He'll lock yours in his own."

She did not answer; did she comprehend it? I saw her slightly nod, as if it were a "yes." Her hand moved slowly on the hem of the clean bed sheet, as if to "touch the hem," as that Bible woman had.

Was she expecting a resurgence of life blood that would eliminate the cancer cells? Or was she merely grasping for some life-line that rescues the perishing? I could not tell.

This afternoon she slept safe in the arms of Jesus; there was no fear of death, God is true to his word; For I had asked that He release her gently, if she reached out to him; she's resting undisturbed.

J. Visser,

Adapted from Nel Benshop's "Mijn Buurvrouw"

A New Creation

Renewal in Christ's Church

A report prepared for Classes Hamilton and Niagara of the Christian Reformed Church by "The Task Force for Renewal": Rev. Jack Quartel, Chairman
Rev. Richard Stienstra
Rev. Jack Vos, Reporter
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Story

Another Dutchie writes

Johannes de Benaauwde

It is time for me to write because like so many others I also want to express myself and influence opinion or current affairs. I waited 50 years for this. When I was 20 and 30, I was impetuous, opinionated even rash at times. In my forties I lacked self-confidence. Now I am older, more mature. I exaggerate less. I'm more understanding and sober in my judgments and outlook. This does not sound Reformed. You may even suspect me of being a liberal, the kind who puts people before ideas. But I am Reformed and I am Dutch. I have read John Calvin.

If you read Dutch, my surname (which means "the scared one") may lead you to wonder about my personality. You can relax. I am not a stuffy, uptight, fear-ridden, old fuddy duddy. Rather I consider myself open-minded, cultured and well-read, even though I am a pipe fitter by trade. You may not believe this, but I like the music of Mozart, especially when it is performed by James Last and his orchestra.

I believe newspaper journalists and columnists are complainers by nature. My wife calls me a complainer and I hope that that makes me a journalist.

One advantage I have over many columnists is my age and experience. Too many of our writers are young bucks. Their complaining amounts to nothing more than disappointment that Mom and Dad, the teacher and the policeman are imperfect. You will not hear anything that sounds like disappointment from me. Neither will you hear me sloganeering. From me you will not hear those catchy words "Reformed" and "all areas of life." No way! I do not understand them. Neither does anyone else. If they did they would not spend so much time explaining them.

I live in Leechtown on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. From my position on the map much of the fuss about being Reformed comes from the East. Here in the West we know how to be Reformed. We learned the lessons from the past as they happened in Holland. We know that if we try too hard to be Reformed we will play into the hands of socialism, secularism and any other ism you can think of.

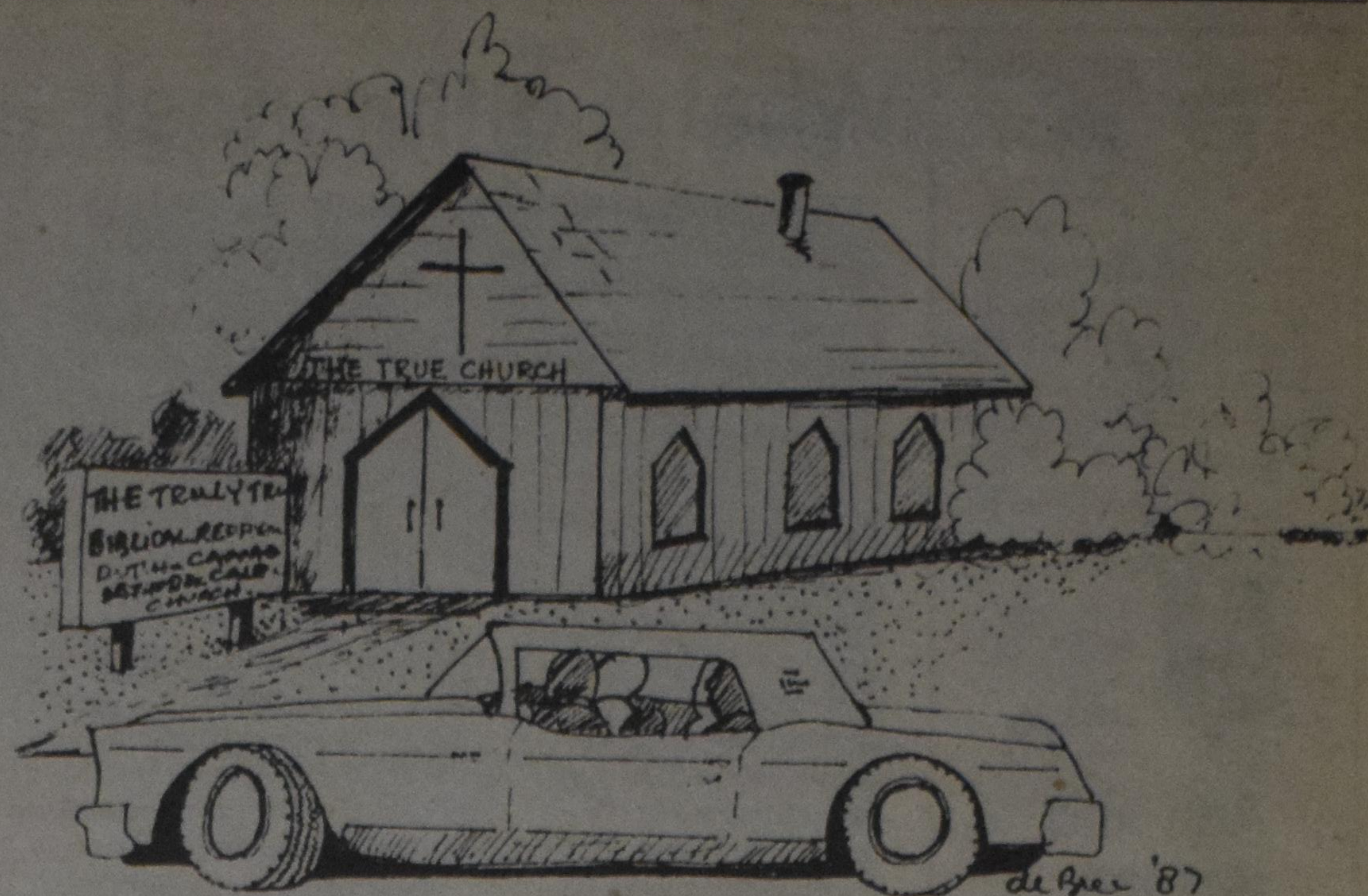
In the West we have none of the arguing like they have in the East. We are without those vocal fundamentalist types who still want to call themselves Reformed and we are without a strong group of Reformed reforming reformers.

Anyone here who wants to be really, truly Reformed has

either to become a columnist for a Calvinistic newspaper or study theology and move East. Here you can try to stir up the people but they will not go for it. They would rather turn Pentecostal than go through the hassle of being pure-bred Reformed.

If we continue this Reformed talk, 20 years from now our children will be sick of it and will marry Catholics to prove to us old folks that Christians can get along. And when our children discover it is possible to keep company with the unreformed without lightening striking them down, they may turn to premarital sex, and also living together. Then we have what we are afraid of and all this talk of being pure-bred Reformed will drive the young people to unreformed behaviour.

The extreme Reformeds will have to take some of the responsibility for the problems that will arise from this striving for a true Reformed identity. They cannot blame us middle-of-the-road types for every



problem that faces the Reformed community. What abuse is not hurled at us?

We are to blame for the lack of willing workers in the church. We are too caught up in materialism, secularism, individualism and any other ism that comes on the market.

It is creepy knowing there are fellow Reformeds who spend energy criticizing us lukewarm types and to know that those critics want to be our shepherds; shepherds that would rather butcher the 99 in order to keep the one from being led astray.

I feel none of their anxiety. And the situation is much better than what they make it out to be. Their talk is rhetoric because on the outside these extremists appear as middle-of-the-road as us. They too want a comfortable home, good income, and a winter holiday. Nothing Reformed is going to stand in the way of their material comfort and social standing.

Yet, they are uneasy. Their

Reformedness does not stand out from the rest of society.

They have no visible distinguishing marks of Reformedness aside from ideas. Since they are camouflaged and unrecognizable, the extremists propose that society become Reformed in all areas of life.

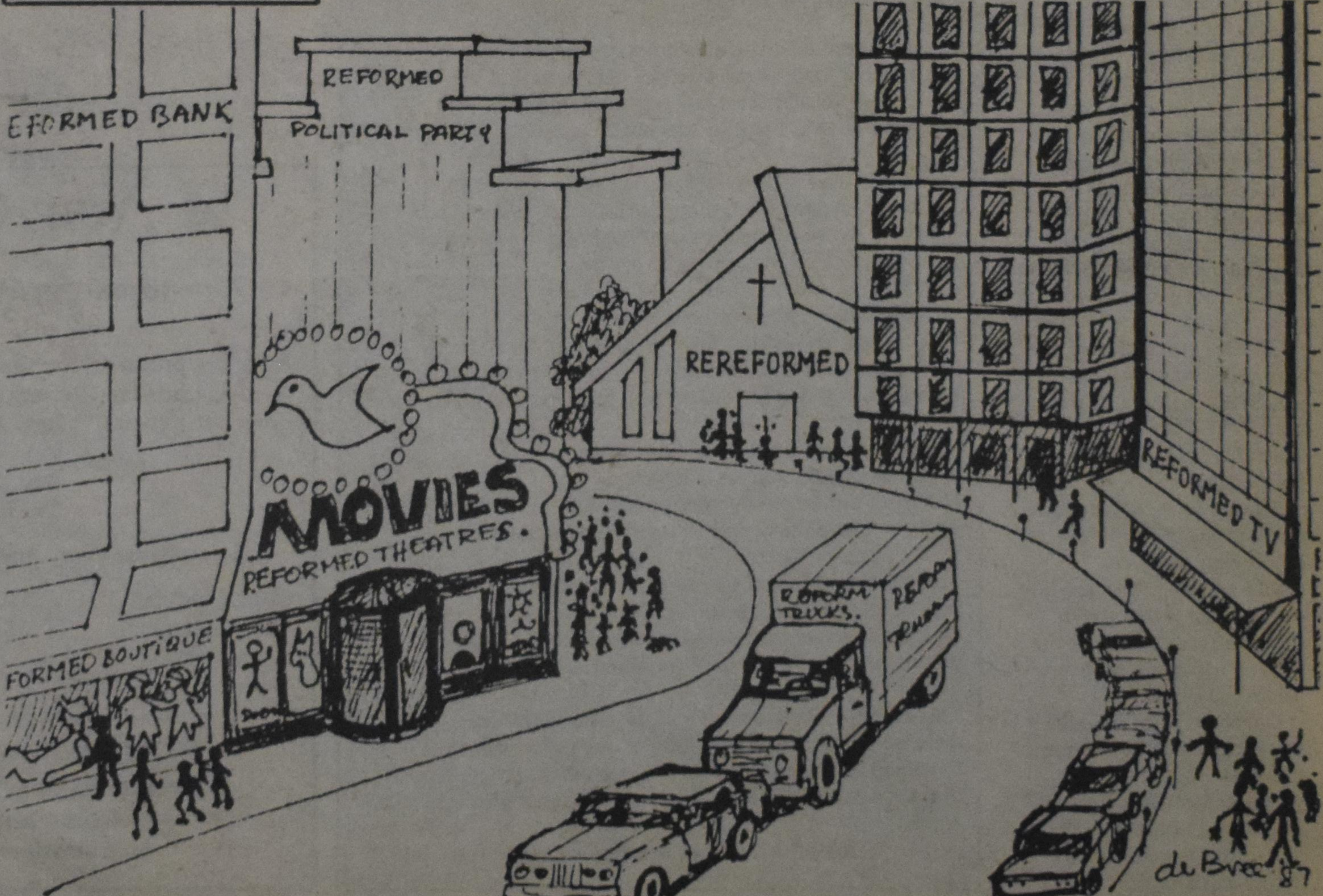
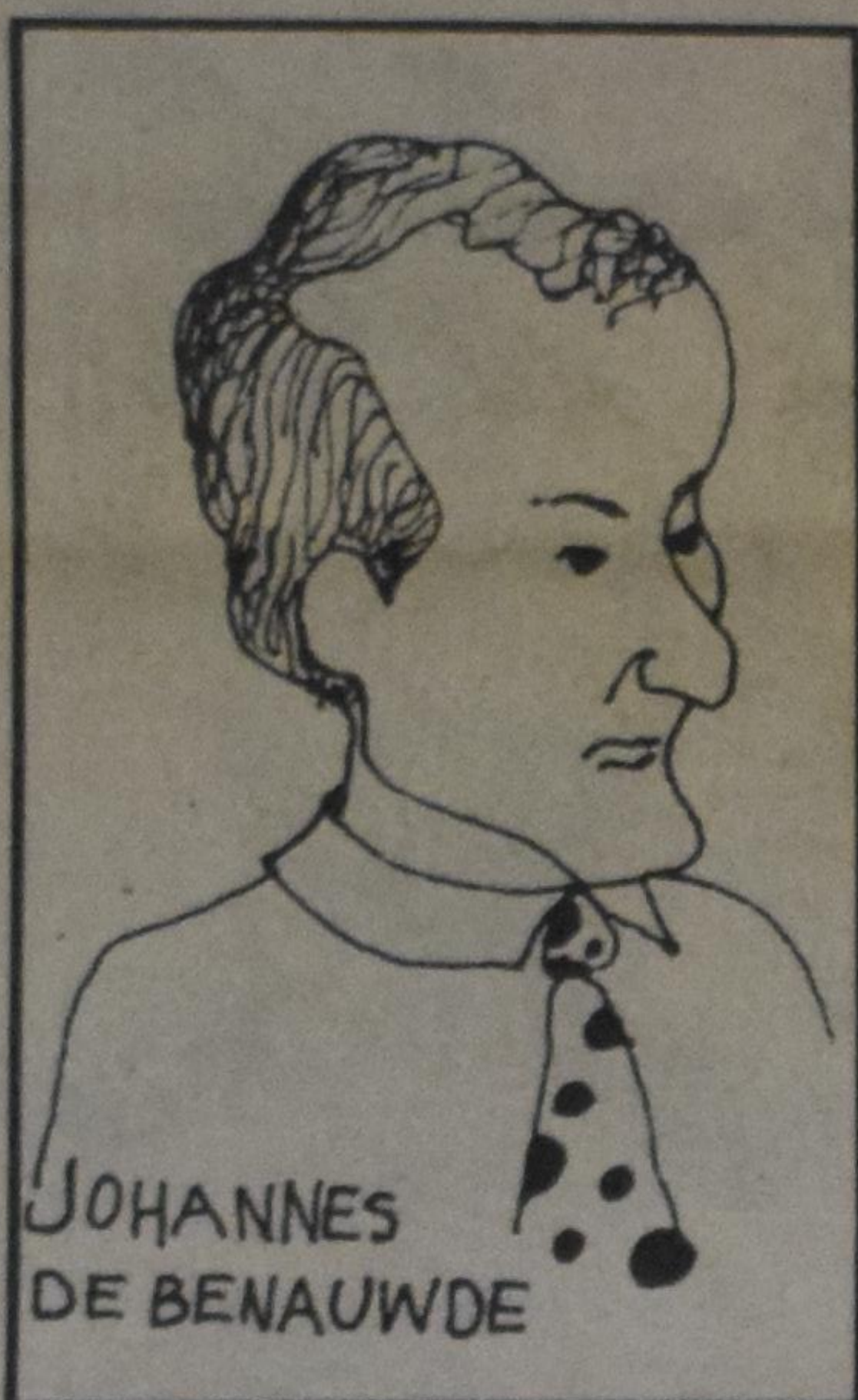
What the individual cannot attain must be accomplished in community and only individualism stands in the way of their objective. Now they are comfortable, yet uneasy. When all areas of life are subdued, they will be fully relaxed knowing that the brass in Ottawa and the provinces will be Reformeds. Those Reformeds in Ottawa will stress obedience to authority, down-play rights and hope for a Reformed monarch to establish his throne in Canada.

Those fundamentalistic types who will call themselves Reformed will feel relaxed enough to start another church to be named the Rereformed Church in Reformed Canada.

Us middle-of-the-rovers will stay in the middle of the road (not to be confused with fence sitting) and remain true to the Reformed traditions while the extremists run off in opposite directions.

Who knows what will happen to us Reformed Dutchies? I suspect little will develop from all this talk of being Reformed. And there will always be a group with objections. They may even go off on their own and be forgotten until on one of those Sunday afternoon drives we bump into a forlorn church along a dirt road and the sign on the church reads, THE TRULY TRUE BIBLICALLY REREFORMED DUTCH-CANADIAN ORTHODOX CALVINISTIC CHURCH.

Johannes de Benaauwde is a free-lance pipe fitter who lives in Leechtown, British Columbia.



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8:30 - 10:00 AM
WORSHIP, SESSION #4
10:30 - 5:00 PM
Elective Workshops 2, 3 & 4
7:00 - 8:30 PM
WORSHIP, SESSION #5
Speaker: Rev. Frank Tillapaugh
9:00 - 11:00 PM
CONCERT: Pete Carlson

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22

8:30 - 10:00 AM
Elective Workshops
10:30 - Noon
GENERAL SESSION #6
Speakers: Rich Hurst
Lorlie Brown

NOON
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2:00 - 11:30 PM
Keystone Adventure
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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23

6:30 AM - 10:00 PM
VAIL ADVENTURE
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6:30 AM - 9:30
Snow Train Adventure — Winter Park
skiing or sightseeing

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Noon - 7:00 PM
Conference Registration
1:00 - 4:00 PM
The Old West — Denver Adventure
7:00 - 8:30 PM
GENERAL SESSION #1
Speaker: Tim Hansel
9:30 - 11:00 PM
Square Dance/Volleyball

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20

8:30 - 10:00 AM
GENERAL SESSION #2
Speaker: Tim Hansel
10:30 - Noon
Elective Workshops
1:30 - 3:00 PM
GENERAL SESSION #3
Speaker: Rich Hurst
4:00 - 6:00 PM
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CONCERT: James Ward

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Classifieds

Christmas Greetings	Thanks	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Obituaries
<p>BREUKELMAN: We wish all our family and friends a blessed Christmas and a healthy and a happy New Year. Onze beste wensen voor de feestdagen. Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Breukelman, 358 King St. W., Dundas, ON L9H 1W7</p>	<p>LANGBROEK: A heartfelt thank you to all who showed their love on our 50th wedding anniversary. We were overwhelmed. It was an unforgettable time for us all. Thank you again. Mrs. and Mr. M. Langbroek</p>	<p>Blija Wyoming 1948 January 8 1988 With thanks to our Lord, giver of all good things, we will celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents, DICK and IDA DOUWES Congratulations and love from your children and grandchildren: John — Ottawa Keith & Diane; Paul, Michael, Pamela, Angela — London Hennie & George; James, Derrick, Gerrit — Cornwall Douglas — Kitchener Peter & Joyce; David, Samara — Kitchener Frances — Florida Anita & Mel; Patricia, Michael, Sharon, Jessica — Wyoming Dennis & Annette; Denise, Steven — Sarnia Jennifer — Sarnia Richard — Wyoming Open house will be held in the Chr. Ref. Church in Wyoming, Saturday, Jan. 9, from 2 o'clock until 4:30. Home address: 551 Brooke St., Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0</p>	<p>Opperdoes Aylmer 1943 January 7 1988 With great joy and thanksgiving to our Lord, we are happy to announce the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents, PETER and MAARTJE VYN (nee Barten) We pray that the Lord will continue to bless and keep them in his care. Congratulations and love from your children and grandchildren: Annie & John Streutker; Mary & Duane Baker Charles Van Lingen Patricia Van Lingen — Woodstock Wilma & Ralph Driezen; John, Peter, Karen — Springfield Margaret & John Kriense Lokker; Jeremy, Ryan, Michael — Culloden Ralph & Tina Vyn — Belmont Open house will be in the Fellowship hall of the Chr. Ref. Church, Aylmer, Ont., on Saturday, Jan. 9, 1988, between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m. Best wishes only, please. Home address: 68 Caverly Rd., Aylmer, ON N5H 2P4</p>	<p>"Jesus said, 'In my Father's house there are many rooms.' " (John 14:2) On Tuesday, Dec. 1, 1987, the Lord suddenly called to his eternal home, JAC DESMIT in his 74th year. Beloved husband of Jane De Smit (nee De Haze). Dear father of: Jack & Mary De Smit — Nashville, Tenn. Mary-Anne & Bart Vanderhoek — London, Ont. Ron & Harmina De Smit — London, Ont. Also loved by seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild. "I lift my eyes to the hills — where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth." (Ps. 121:1,2) The funeral service was held on Friday, Dec. 4, 1987, at the Bethel CRC, London, with Pastor Philip Stel officiating. Home address: 329 Clarke Side Rd., London, ON N5W 5G3</p>
<p>ELLENS: Familie, vrienden en allen die dit lezen: Gezegende Kerstdagen en Nieuwjaar toegewenst! Mrs. T. Ellens-van Kalsbeek, 1310 Exmouth St., Sarnia, ON N7S 3X9</p>	<p>VEENSTRA: Thanks to the Lord for his blessing in 50 years of married life. Thanks to the children, family and friends who celebrated with us. Peter and Florence Veenstra, St. Catharines, Ont.</p>	<p>Barrie Orillia 1962 December 22 1987 With praise and thanksgiving to God, we celebrate the 25th wedding anniversary of, NICK and MARGARET JONKER (nee Meyer) "For with God nothing shall be impossible." With much love from your children and grandchildren: Helen — Sarnia Richard — Orillia Patty & Patrick; Kimberly, Nicole — Washago Christine — Orillia Home address: 234 Mary St., Orillia, ON L3V 3E6</p>	<p>Lethbridge Keswick 1952 December 27 1987 With gratitude to God for his abiding love and faithfulness, we will celebrate the 35th wedding anniversary of our parents, PETE and ANNY WOLTERS (nee deKlerk) Barb & Eddie Wesselius (fiance) — Keswick, NB Nettie & Glen Pye; Miranda, Glenda, Jonathan, Stephanie — Keswick, NB Rick & Sam Wolters; Justin, Ian — Langley, BC Ben & Joy Wolters; Craig, Curtis — Fredericton, NB Peter & Frances Wolters; Andrea, Krista — Keswick, NB Annie & Kevin Smith; Daniel, Joshua — Sudbury, Ont. Sid Wolters & Shauna Hartevelt — Keswick, NB Jennifer Wolters — at home Sheryl Wolters — at home Home address: 134 Pickard Dr., Keswick, NB E0H 1N0</p>	<p>1901 1987 On Monday, Dec. 7, 1987, our Saviour and Lord glorified our beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, DIENA ELCHIEN VEGTER predeceased on Jan. 6, 1987, by her beloved husband, Hinderikus Arend Vegter. She will be greatly missed by her children: John & Barbara Vegter — Barrie Piet & Annie Vegter — Barrie Henk Vegter — Holland Wiebrandt & *Truus Buikema — Cherry Valley Harco & Diane Vegter — Barrie And by her 18 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren. "The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." (Psalm 121:8)</p>
<p>MIDDEL: I would like to wish all my family and friends God's blessing in the New Year. Mrs. Alice Middel, 12 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5</p>	<p>BIRTHDAYS TENSEN: "Seventy years are given us! And some may even live to eighty. But even the best of these years are often emptiness and pain; soon they disappear, and we are gone." (Psalm 90:10 Living Bible) A very happy 70th birthday to you Mom (Oma) from all your children and grandchildren on January 5, 1988. Mrs. Tina Tensen, 110 Caverly Rd., Apt. 10, Aylmer, ON N5H 2P4</p>	<p>the occasion of their 35th wedding anniversary. We pray that God may grant them many more years of happiness and blessings. Congratulations from: Hessel & Audrey Vander Velde; Amanda, Shawn, Tyler Arnold & Jill Vander Velde; Justin, Derek, Christie Theresa & John Van Manen; Timothy, Kimberly, Jamie Home address: Main St., Beachburg, ON K0J 1C0</p>	<p>PERSONALS Single man in his forties looking for a woman. Write to Calvinist Contact, File #2479, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9</p>	
<p>Classified Rates Births \$22.00 Marriages & Engagements \$25.00 Anniversaries \$30.00 Obituaries \$30.00 Notes of thanks \$21.00 Birthdays \$20.00 All other one-column classified advertisements: \$7.50 per column inch with a minimum of \$10. For letter under file number, \$10 extra. Photos: \$7.50 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more.) Calvinist Contact will not be responsible for any errors due to hand-written or phoned-in advertisements. NOTE: Newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in Calvinist Contact will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only \$10! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose \$10 and the couple's future address. Note our new address: Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd., 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9</p>	<p>BIRTHS BATTERINK: "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes." (Psalm 118:23) We, Clarence and Jeri, with joy and thanksgiving, announce the birth of our son, KYLE LEONARD, on Dec. 4, 1987, at 8:14 a.m., weighing a healthy 8 lbs. 8 oz.; a precious, and patiently prayed for, brother for Melanie. Rejoicing with us are grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. L. Batterink and Mr. and Mrs. S. Miedema, of Hamilton, Ont. 457 East 42nd St., Hamilton, ON L8T 3B4</p>	<p>ANNIVERSARIES 1952 December 28 1987 With joy and thanksgiving to our Lord, we are happy to announce the 35th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents, HENDRICK and MARY BLOEMENDAL (nee Bruinink) We pray that the Lord will continue to bless and keep them in his care. Congratulations and love from your children and grandchildren: Jane & Marinus Noordermeer; Christine, Monic, Marcel, Benjamin — Delaware, Ont. Elbert & Debbie Bloemendal; Christopher Devon, Aimee — Mt. Brydges, Ont. Henrietta & Henry Swinkels; Neil, Ian — Chatham, Ont. Ben Bloemendal — Chatham, Ont. Open house will be held in the Mt. Brydges town hall, Adelaide St., Mt. Brydges, Ont., at 7:30 p.m., on Monday, Dec. 28. Home address: 114 County Rd. 14, Mt. Brydges, ON N0L 1E0</p>		
<p>Miscellaneous</p>				
<p>Why not place an ad in Calvinist Contact?!</p>				
<p>For Sale</p>				

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For Sale

A Birthday Gift for Kids!

A new softcover cartoon book:
Bubba Louie • A Collection of Comic Strips
by long-time cartoonist Bob ("Bowie") Wierdsma. Features cast of black and white kids in various humorous escapades; 36 pages; two-colour cover. Costs only \$5.00 each.

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29-901 South Station St.

Weston, ON M9N 3T8

The Board Of

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Existing Apartment Complex

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Near Jarvis

These plans call for a 60 Unit Rest Home Facility. Occupants will enjoy a comfortable one-bedroom apartment and be provided with meals, housekeeping and laundry services. This is not a nursing home.

If Interested Please Write:

Secretary Of The Board, c/o 76 Townsend Drive, Townsend, Ontario N0A 1S0

Name

Address

Phone Number

Classifieds

<div><div>Obituaries</div><p>Psalm 23</p><p>GEESJEVOS</p><p>of Drayton was taken home by her Lord after a lengthy illness on Thursday, Dec. 10, 1987, in her 79th year.</p><p>Dearly beloved wife of Jan Vos.</p><p>Dear mother of:</p><p>Hillegonda & William H. Smith — Waterloo</p><p>Hilligje & Sidney Feikema — Norval</p><p>Albert & Wilma Vos — Drayton</p><p>Henry & Joanne Vos — Edmonton, Alta.</p><p>Loving grandmother of:</p><p>John & Karen Smith — Kitchener</p><p>Gladys & Dwayne Thielke — Lucknow</p><p>Glenda, Marilyn, Joan and Heather Feikema — Norval</p><p>John, Burke, Ruth and Joyce Vos — Drayton</p><p>Cheryl and Julia Vos — Edmonton, Alta.</p><p>Also survived by her three great-grandchildren: Carita, Alanna and Frederick; three sisters: Roefie Neutel of Ottawa and Roelien Oving and Hilligje Spriensma, both of Holland.</p><p>Predeceased by one brother, one sister, one son and one granddaughter.</p><p>Funeral service took place in the Chr. Ref. Church, Drayton, on Monday, Dec. 14, 1987. Rev. Dirk Velthuisen officiated.</p></div>	<div><div>Teachers</div><p>ALLISTON: Alliston Community Chr. School invites applications for an opening at the K-4 level starting Sept. 1988. The position is for one year only, replacing a teacher on leave. Depending on the grade level, it could be either single or double grade, full- or part-time. An interest in music would be an asset. Address all applications and inquiries to: John Lunshof, Principal, Alliston Community Chr. School, P.O. Box 1122, Alliston, ON L0M 1A0</p><p>AYLMER: Immanuel Chr. School seeks applications from teachers interested in a possible part-time position in the junior area beginning early in 1988. Please send resume to the school, 75 Caverly Rd., Aylmer, ON N5H 2P6 or for more information call: Andy Vander Ploeg, Principal at (519) 773-8476 (school) or (519) 773-5009 (home).</p></div> <div><div>Help Wanted</div><p>Full-time help wanted on dairy farm in Drayton area. Contact: Dick Keunen, R.R.#2, Drayton, ON N0G 1P0; (519) 638-2271.</p><p>Dairy farm in the Niagara Peninsula requires full-time person beginning January 1988. Year-round employment; room and board provided. Salary commensurate with experience. Call (416) 774-3721.</p><p>Wanted: reliable, experienced herdsman for modern dairy farm (190 cows) in Nova Scotia. Housing provided. Excellent salary for the right person. Serious inquiries only. Call: 1-902-758-2644 or write to: Bokma Farms Ltd., R.R.#1, Shubenacadie, Hants County, NS 90N 2H0</p></div>	<div><div>Teachers</div><p>KITCHENER: Laurentian Hills Chr. School, Kitchener, Ont., requires a Grade 3/4 teacher for the 1988/89 school year. Applicant should be able to teach French. Experience preferred. Send resume to: Principal, Laurentian Hills Chr. School, 11 Laurentian Dr., Kitchener, ON N2E 1C1</p><p>LUCKNOW: The Lucknow & District Christian School in Lucknow, Ont., has a possible opening for a teaching-principal for the 1988-89 school year. Please send all letters of inquiry and resumes to Mrs. Ettie Broer, Principal, Lucknow & District Christian School, Lucknow, ON N0G 2H0.</p><p>PRINCIPALSHIP</p><p>Vancouver Christian School Association is seeking candidates for Sept. 1988 for a principal for its secondary school. Applicants will be screened the week of Feb. 1. Send resumes to: Search Committee, Vancouver Chr. School Association, 3496 Haida Dr., Vancouver, BC V5M 3Z4. For information call: (604) 430-3062.</p><p>WOODSTOCK: For the 1988/89 school year, we will be in need of a qualified, preferably experienced, special education teacher, with proven organizational skills. Some regular classroom teaching (presently 20%) may be involved. Strengths in French and/or music will be desirable assets. We offer pleasant working conditions in up-to-date modern facilities. Direct your resume or inquiries to the principal, John Knox Chr. School, 800 Juliana Dr., P.O. Box 243, Woodstock, ON N4S 7W8. Phone: (519) 539-1492.</p></div>	<div><div>Real Estate</div><p>100 acres near Listowel. All workable open bottom land; two-storey brick home. Feeder barn for cattle and hogs; silo. Large implement shed.</p><p>60 acres. Bank barn setup for hogs, furrowing crates and weiner decks. Silo; large shed. Three-bedroom home, modernized, main floor laundry.</p><p>200 acres, open bottom land. Two barns setup for beef and hogs. Could easily adapt to dairy. Licensed gravel pit at rear of farm. Four-bedroom home. Some hardwood bush.</p><p>100 acres, farrow to finish hog farm; 85 acres cropable; balance mixed bush. One and one half storey brick home. Bank barn with stable cleaner. 200 amp hydro.</p><p>Pizza outlet and family restaurant seating 42 people, showing good profit. Apartment on second floor. Above properties close to Christian school and churches.</p><p>Contact:</p><p>P.H. HILLER REALTY LTD. 935 Main St. W. Listowel, Ont. Ph: 519-291-1544 Eve: Albert Carson 291-1395 or Helen Cullen 291-1709</p></div>	<div><div>Real Estate</div><p>For sale: New 3-bedroom bungalow, close to CR church, one minute walk to downtown, your choice of carpet and cupboards. 25 King st. N., Frankford, Ont. Phone: 613-398-7834.</p></div> <div><div>ADA REALTY LTD.</div><p>3412-102 Ave. Edmonton, AB T5W 0A3 Tel. 471-1814</p><p>Sid Vandermeulen</p><p>Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district.</p><p>Het vertrouwde adres.</p></div> <div><div>VANDERGOOT REALTY INC.</div><p>VRI</p><p>MLS</p><p>Multiple Listing Service</p><p> Jerry Vandergoot President</p><p>Your complete real estate service</p><p>Serving London, Ontario, and surrounding area.</p><p>402 Oxford Street E. (corner of Oxford & Colborne) London, Ontario N6A 1V7 Phone (519) 672-9970</p></div> <div><div>Why not place your ad in C.C.?</div><p>ADDRESS CHANGE</p><p>Please use this form and allow four weeks for processing request.</p><p>Attach your present label here.</p><p>Please indicate when new address takes effect.</p><p>Effective: _____</p><p>Name: _____</p><p>New Address: _____</p><p>City: _____</p><p>Prov.: _____</p><p>Code: _____</p><p>mail to:</p><p>CALVINIST CONTACT 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9</p></div>
<div><div>Help Wanted</div><p>Large modern dairy farm in Eastern Ontario has a vacancy for a herdsperson to milk in computerized facilities and supervised total herd care, or will train a self-motivated person. One-half mile from village and minutes from Chr. Ref. Church, Christian and public schools, shopping and recreational facilities. Three-bedroom house available on the farm. Salary, holidays and weekends off to be discussed. Apply with resume to: Zandbergen Farms Ltd., Attention: Bill Zandbergen, R.R.#2, Brinston, ON K0E 1C0. Phone: (613) 652-2243.</p></div>	<div><div>DORDT COLLEGE</div><p>invites applications for a position in the</p><p>English Department</p><p>Applicants should expect to teach introductory freshman composition and literature courses plus additional courses in literature, writing or criticism — as determined by departmental needs and the applicant's qualifications. The Ph.D. is preferred. Qualified individuals who are committed to a biblical, Reformed, theology and educational philosophy are invited to send a personal resume, academic credentials, and personal references to:</p><p>Dr. Douglas Ribbens Vice President for Academic Affairs Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa 51250</p><p><i>Ethnic minorities and women are encouraged to apply. Dordt College is an Equal Opportunity Employer.</i></p></div>	<div><div>The Calvin Christian Elementary School</div><p>in Chatham</p><p>invites applications for the position of a</p><p>PRINCIPAL</p><p>Our school consists of about 210 students and 14 both full- and part-time teachers. We require a person who has biblical insight, sound Christian perspective and proven teaching ability, and who is able to give sensitive leadership to a dedicated staff and supportive community.</p><p>Please submit application and resume to:</p><p>Mr. M. VanLingen, Principal 72 Tissiman Ave., Chatham, ON N7M 4G5 School telephone: (519) 352-4980</p></div>	<div><div>Help Wanted</div><p>SALES MANAGER</p><p>required by a leading floral industry grower/wholesaler. Responsibilities would include the co-ordination of sales, of packing and delivery of flowers, plants and floral supplies throughout Ontario, parts of Quebec and New York state.</p><p>Interested applicants should submit resume to:</p><p>CREEKSIDE GARDENS LTD. Fairlane Rd., Jordan Station, ON L0R 1S0 (416) 562-4126</p></div>	
<div><div>SALES REPRESENTATIVES REQUIRED</div><p>Van's International, a division of Hagemeyer Canada Inc., has a vacancy for an ambitious person to sell a range of food products. He/She must be prepared to travel throughout Eastern Ontario selling to various types of retail outlets. Prior experience in the food industry would be an asset. A competitive remuneration package will be offered to the right candidate.</p><p>Apply in writing with complete resume to:</p><p>P.O. Box 670 Burlington, Ontario</p><p>VAN'S INTERNATIONAL IMPORT FOOD DISTRIBUTORS / DISTRIBUTEURS D'ALIMENTS IMPORTES</p></div>	<div><div>Help Wanted</div><p>Controller/Administrator</p><p>required to head the financial department of a progressive company in the London area. Candidates should possess the following qualifications:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• strong management & communication skills• be conversant with computer accounting systems (OSAS)• university degree — B.Sc./C.G.A. or equivalent• 5 to 10 years related experience<p>The right person would have the opportunity to become part of a growing diversified company.</p><p>Send resume, including salary expectations to:</p><p>File #2478, Calvinist Contact 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9</p></div>			

Events

U2 a hit with young Christians

NEW YORK, NY (EP) — “The Joshua Tree,” the latest album from superstar rock band U2, has been in the top 10 on pop charts for 34 weeks, and made its debut as number 36 on Billboard magazine’s inspirational music chart. “The Joshua Tree” is the first

rock album to make the Christian music chart, which is usually topped by Christian artists like Sandi Patti and Amy Grant. Although U2 promoter Bob Catania says, “We don’t go out of our way to promote them as a Christian rock act,” the inspirational lyrics of U2’s

songs have won the new wave band a strong Christian following.

Gospel music hits big time

NASHVILLE, TN (EP) — The Gospel Music Association (GMA) has secured the services of the William Morris Agency for television representation. The signing with the powerhouse talent agency marks the first time the GMA has used outside representation. GMA is now making plans for Gospel Music ’88, a Nashville festival set for April 10-14.

Christian Reformed Church

Called

— to Rehoboth, Bowmanville, Ont., Rev. Jerry Hoytema of (new Street) Burlington, Ont.

Accepted

— to First, Thunder Bay, Ont., Rev. William Dirksen of Chula Vista, Calif.

Canadian Reformed Church

Called

— to Immanuel, Edmonton, Alta., Rev. W. Den Hollander of Winnipeg, Man.

— to Neerlandia, Alta. Rev. B. J. Berends of Smithers, B.C.

Declined

— to Chilliwack, B.C., Rev. E. Kampen of Houston, B.C.
— to Surrey, B.C., Cand. J. Koelewijn of Kampen, The Netherlands, for Mission in Sao Jose da Coroa Grande, Brazil.

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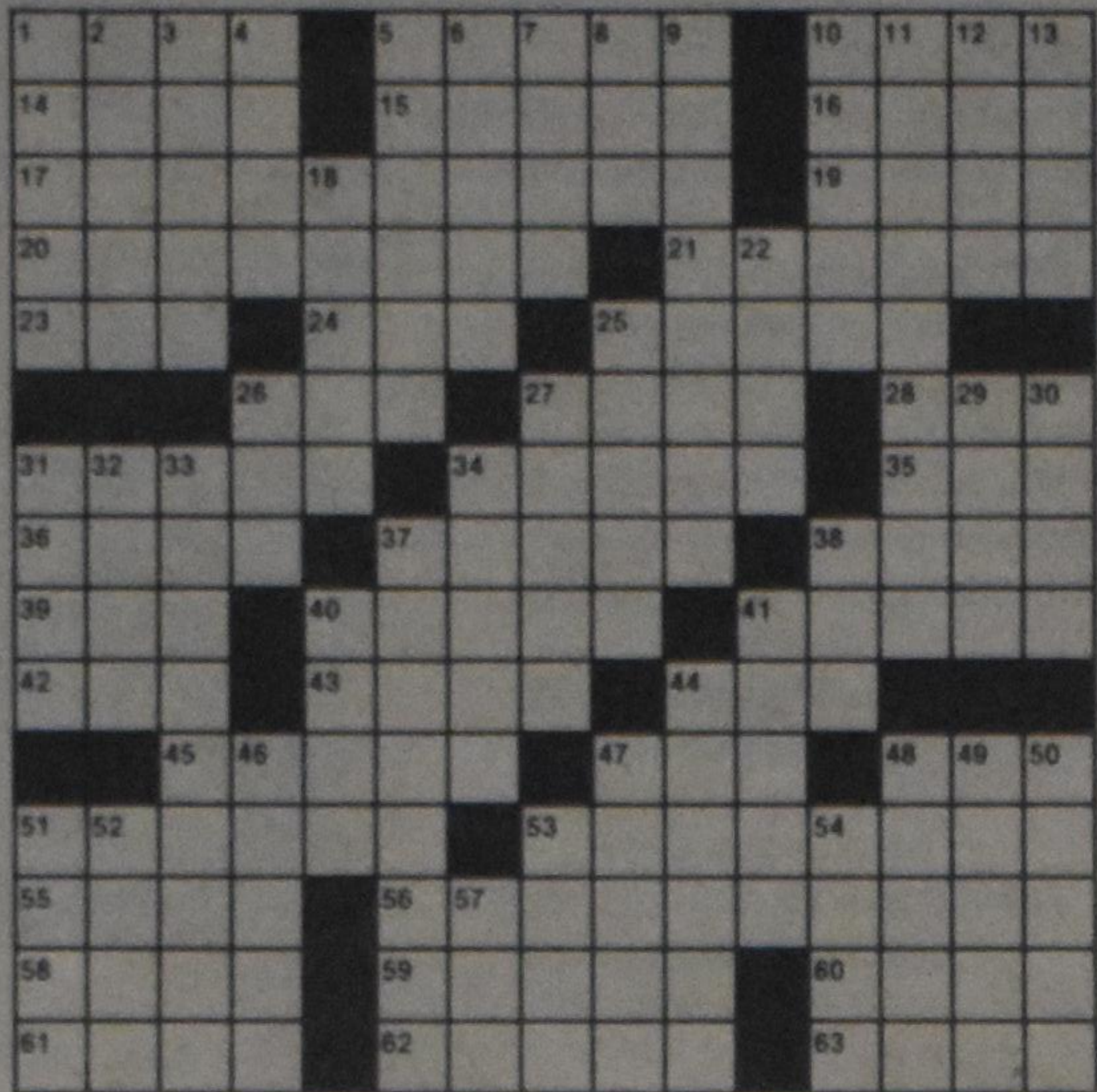


Schrijf naar: CSS, 455 Spadina Ave., #210, Toronto, ON M5S 2G8
Of bel: (416) 598-2181

Weekly Crossword

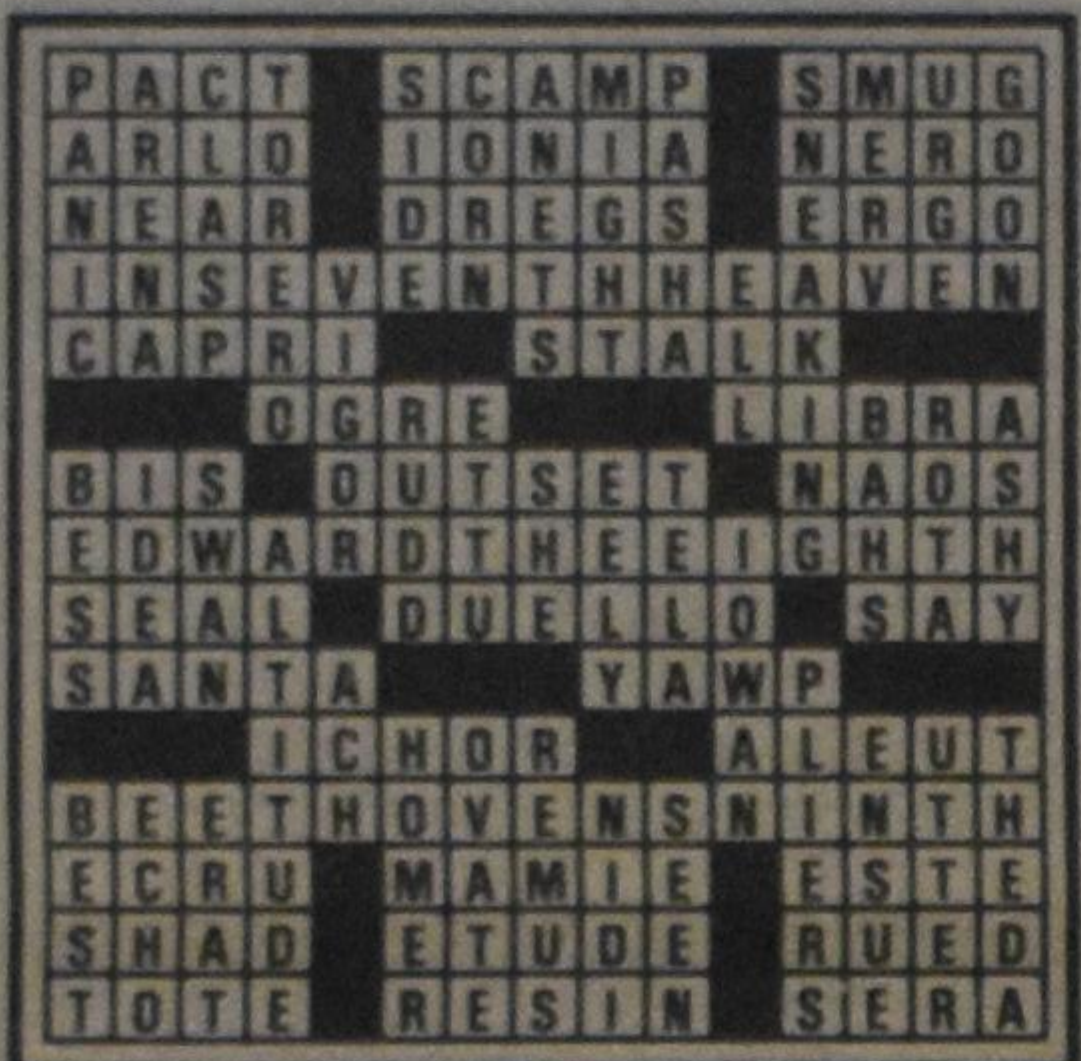
by Betty Jorgensen

- ACROSS
- 1 Gray wolf
 - 5 Yellowish-brown
 - 10 Times of day; abbr.
 - 14 Aboveboard
 - 15 Stir
 - 16 Space
 - 17 Having the feet turned in
 - 19 Wheel rod
 - 20 Vastness
 - 21 Overwhelm
 - 23 Group
 - 24 Habitat: pref.
 - 25 Tangle
 - 26 Genetic letters
 - 27 Steak order
 - 28 Poetry form
 - 31 — Bill (legendary cowboy)
 - 34 Underage
 - 35 Swear
 - 36 Slips
 - 37 Shining black
 - 38 Soccer great
 - 39 Past
 - 40 Mississippi sight
 - 41 Boxer's weapons
 - 42 Pull behind
 - 43 State firmly
 - 44 Attained
 - 45 Deadly sins number
 - 47 Sine — non
 - 48 Batter
 - 51 Roof support
 - 53 Archer's aim
 - 55 Space
 - 56 Black-banded fish
 - 58 Dance part
 - 59 Cosmetic name
 - 60 Arthur of tennis
 - 61 A Fountain
 - 62 Endure
 - 63 Tableland



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Last Week's Puzzle



- DOWN
- 1 Canthers
 - 2 Deem
 - 3 Sired

- 4 Lulu
- 5 Locker item
- 6 Maxim
- 7 Encourage
- 8 Natives: suff.
- 9 Snoopy's rival
- 10 "— to Live"
- 11 Digitalis plants
- 12 Ring
- 13 Pintail duck
- 18 Signs
- 22 Above
- 25 Rajah's lady
- 26 John — Passos
- 27 Stream
- 29 Blockhead
- 30 Lambs' dams
- 31 Fuel
- 32 Therefore
- 33 Eye wrinkles
- 34 Expert
- 37 Setbacks
- 38 "The — and the Pendulum"

- 40 Bathe
- 41 Colt and filly
- 44 Swallowed
- 46 Public storehouse
- 47 Ruler
- 48 Della of song
- 49 Indian maids
- 50 Jason's wife
- 51 Grate
- 52 Comedian
- 53 Gr. letter
- 54 Phony
- 57 Presidential monogram

Calendar of Events

- Dec. 27 Annual sacred concert at 8 p.m. in Knox Presbyterian Church, Church St., St. Catharines (across from City Hall). With organist Christiaan Teeuwse and "The Ambassadors."
- Dec. 31 Annual New Year's Eve hymnsing at the Guelph Reformed Church, 79 Speedvale Ave., East, Guelph, with guest organist Jan Overduin of the Faculty of Music, Wilfrid Laurier University at 7:30 p.m.
- Jan. 9 RCBPA Sarnia Chapter breakfast meeting, 8:30 a.m. at "Golden Mile Steakhouse," Sarnia, Ont. A time of fellowship, sharing and planning. For reservations call (519) 332-2061 or 336-7727.
- Jan. 13 RCBPA Hamilton Chapter breakfast meeting at Holiday Inn, Burlington, Ont. Reception at 7 a.m., program at 7:30 a.m. Speaker Mr. Robert Ryan of Phoenix Continental on the topic "Liability Insurance." Reservations required: (416) 524-1203.
- Jan. 13-Feb. 10 Extension Series 1988: "Planet for the Taking" presented by The King's College, at the Calgary Chr. School at 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 13, 27; Feb. 3 and 10.
- Jan. 14-17 Couples treat at Fair Havens Conference Centre, Beaverton, Ont. For info. call (705) 426-7378.
- Jan. 15 Canadian debut of the popular musical drama "Together Again For the Very First Time," by American Christian artists Kirk and Patti Lytle at 7:30 p.m. Great entertainment as great personalities of church history come to life before your eyes. For tickets and reservation, call Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont., at (416) 648-2131.
- Jan. 20 Youth in concert: Edmonton Youth Orchestra, The King's College Choir and U of A Concert Choir, directed by Michael Massey, at 8 p.m. at St. Joseph's Basilica, Edmonton, Alta. Extension Series 1988: "A Planet for the Taking" presented by The King's College; at the college, Edmonton, at 8 p.m. on Jan. 21, 28; Feb. 4 and 11.
- Jan. 23 Organ concert by Andre Knevel on the newly-installed Casavant organ of Trinity CRC, 99 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont., at 8 p.m.
- Jan. 25 RCBPA London Chapter organizational dinner meeting at "The Black Angus," Wharfedale Rd. S., London, Ont. Reception 6:30 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. Speaker Mr. W. Smouter: "Tensions of a Christian in the business world." Reservations call: (519) 686-0193 or (416) 524-1203.
- Jan. 27 RCBPA Smithville Chapter. An evening meeting at "The Old Farm Inn," #20 Highway, Smithville, Ont. Reception 7:30 p.m., program at 8 p.m. Speaker Mr. C. Keuning, C.A.: "How to get bank financing and government grants." Reservations (416) 957-7766 or 524-1203.
- Jan. 28-Mar. 3 Dobson film series "Turn Your Heart Towards Home" in the East Strathroy CRC at 8 p.m. on Jan. 28, Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25 and Mar. 3.
- Jan. 30 A show of family entertainment (acting-dancing-music) presented by Jerry Jonkheer and guest performers. At 7 p.m. in the Willowdale Chr. School Auditorium, Willowdale, Ont. \$6 admission. For info. call (416) 733-1799.
- Feb. 3-12 Series of presentations by Professor Dale Grotenhuis on the new Psalter Hymnal. Feb. 3: First CRC, Sarnia, Ont.; Feb. 4: First CRC, London, Ont.; Feb. 5: First CRC, Drayton, Ont.; Feb. 6: Auditorium, Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.; Feb. 7: Trinity CRC, St. Catharines, Ont.; Feb. 8: Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ont.; Feb. 9: Rehoboth CRC, Bowmanville, Ont.; Feb. 10: Grace CRC, Agincourt, Ont.; Feb. 11: First CRC, Barrie, Ont.; Feb. 12: Second CRC, Brampton, Ont. All presentations begin at 8 p.m.
- Feb. 12-14 Family retreat at Fair Havens Conference Centre, Beaverton, Ont. For info. call (705) 426-7378.
- Feb. 13 Dedication of the famous REIL tracker-action pipe organ in the auditorium of Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. The two-manual, 2000-pipe organ from Heerde, The Netherlands, will be played by virtuoso organist Christiaan Teeuwse, Redeemer's new Assistant Professor of Music. Starts at 8:00 p.m.
- Feb. 22-23 RCBPA's fourth annual convention at Holiday Inn, Burlington, Ont. For info. call (416) 524-1203.
- Feb. 24 Agricultural Trip to Israel — a two-week working holiday for farmers. For info. contact Molly Ann Schwarcz at Travel Connections, Hamilton, Ont. Phone (416) 521-8803.
- Apr. 16 Organ/trumpet concert with Jan Overduin and Eric Schultz at 8 p.m. in Redeemer College Auditorium, Ancaster, Ont. For tickets call (416) 648-2131, ext. 213.

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Dated	Mailed	Two column ad deadline	Classified deadline
Fri. Jan. 8	Tues. Jan. 5	Tues. Dec. 22-8:30a.m.	Wed. Dec. 23-8:30a.m.
Fri. Jan. 15	Tues. Jan. 12	Wed. Jan. 6-8:30a.m.	Thurs. Jan. 7-8:30a.m.
Fri. Jan. 22	Tues. Jan. 19	Wed. Jan. 13-8:30a.m.	Thurs. Jan. 14-8:30a.m.

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Photo Credit:
Dale Van Donselaar

A series of presentations of the new Psalter Hymnal will be held D.V. in February 1988.

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All presentations start at 8 p.m.

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Dutch

Persoverzicht

Carl D. Tuyl



W e beginnen een beetje kijk te krijgen op het voorgestelde tarievenverdrag. Auto's moeten voor tenminste 50% uit Noord-Amerikaans werk bestaan om tolvrij te zijn. Op het gebied van energie gaat de deur naar Amerika wijd open voor de Canadese industrie en er is geen verlies van soevereiniteit. In extreme situaties zullen de twee landen gemeenschappelijk toegang hebben tot elkaars grondstoffen.

De Amerikanen mogen niet meer dan tien procent van de aandelen van Canadese banken bezitten, en regeringsleningen mogen in Amerika verkocht worden door onze banken. Fabrikanten mogen binnen tien jaar een bijna volkomen tolvrije grens verwachten. De laatste invoerrechten die verwijderd zullen worden zijn die op schoenen. Hout was grotendeels al vrij van accijnzen maar de bestaande tegenmaatregelen in verband met de invoer van houten dakbedekking en vuren-hout blijven van kracht tenminste tot 1991.

In de landbouw blijven de beslissingsrechten van bedrijfsraden van kracht, alhoewel verhoogde invoer van Amerikaanse zuivel en pluimvee-produkten zal worden toegestaan. Er zal gestreefd worden naar gelijkmatige graan-subsidies. De metaal-industrie is buitengesloten van

invoerbeperkingen naar Amerika en profiteert dus wel terdege van het verdrag.

Het debat gaat maar voort. Ik heb echter de indruk dat er een verschuiving van nadruk is, en dat het zwaartepunt van de bezwaren gekoncentreerd werd op andere dan economische factoren. Verlies van soevereiniteit en mogelijke kultuurbeïnvloeding beginnen het zwaarste te wegen.

★★★★

Het Ministerie van Volksgezondheid had een zware dobber in de afgelopen week. Mosselvergiftiging veroorzaakte vele ziektes en het Ministerie verbood de verkoop van bepaalde schaalvissen, afkomstig van de oostelijke kustwaters. Jake Epp's haardos werd nog een tintje grijzer.

★★★★

De regering zond haar kampioen bemiddelaar — William Kelly — om te zien of het dispuut tussen Air Canada en de vakvereniging opgelost kon worden. De staking is over de vakverenigings eis voor waardevaste pensioenen, hetgeen volgens mij geen buitensporig iets is in deze financiële onzekere tijden. Nu, mijnheer Kelly is geslaagd. Was hij er niet in geslaagd de partijen tot overeenstemming

te krijgen dan had de regering de staking met wetgeving moeten beëindigen. Geen wonder dat de Minister die belast is met de verkoop van regeringsondernemingen — Barbara McDougall — nog even de aandacht er op vestigde dat Air Canada te koop is. Als dat zo doorgaat zal de regering geld moeten geven aan eventuele vrijwilligers die het zaakje over zouden willen nemen.

★★★★

Het was maar goed dat Gorbatsjov Washington weer verliet na een paar dagen. Veel Amerikanen waren zo gek met hem dat ze hem wel eens hadden kunnen voorstellen als kandidaat voor het presidentschap. De Gorbyshow bestond voornamelijk uit een prettige glimlach, een knappe vrouw, een uiterst beperkte overeenkomst, en heel Washington werd verliefd op het span. Vergeet echter niet dat deze man staatshoofd is van een land waar mensen omderwille van hun geloof in Jezus Christus vervolgd worden en waar de kerk verdrukt en veronachtzaamd wordt.

★★★★

Zuid-Korea gaat naar de stembus, na één van de luidrustigste, oproerigste en onveiligste verkiezings-

kampanjes. Jammer genoeg is de oppositie tegen het militaire diktatoriale regiem verdeeld.

★★★★

Israel heeft weer te kampen met Palestijns verzet tegen de bezetting van de Westoever en de Gaza Strip. Ook Israël zal moeten leren dat onderdrukking met militair geweld op de duur onmogelijk wordt. Spanje leerde dat eeuwen geleden in Nederland, Nederland leerde dat in Indonesië, Frankrijk in Algerië en Vietnam, Engeland in India; Zuid Afrika en Israël proberen het nog: geweren tegen gemoederen. De geweren verliezen! Het kan lang duren, eeuwen soms, maar vrijheidsdrang vindt een weg.

★★★★

In Hamilton, Ontario, zag in 1985 een nieuwe veteranen organisatie het licht. Het is de Bond van Wapenbroeders in Canada. De organisatie heeft ongeveer 300 leden. De spreker op een onlangs gehouden vergadering merkte op, dat 40 jaar na de oorlogservaringen allerlei psychologische problemen zichtbaar beginnen te worden. Zo, als één van de wapenbroeders een smoesje voor het één of ander nodig heeft, weten ze waar het te vinden is.

★★★★

Ik besluit deze week met mijn gebruikelijke lijst van wensen voor een voorspoedig 1988 voor al mijn lezers: ik hoop dat uw auto het nog een jaartje uit zal houden, dat uw schoenveters niet op zondagmorgen zullen breken, dat de oorvijgen niet uw boontjes zullen opvreten, en dat de spreuken van uw aardbeien af zullen blijven. Ik hoop dat uw kinderen niet zullen spijbelen, en dat uw gade uw tekortkomingen niet openbaar zal maken. Moge uw bed niet instorten des nachts, en uw haren niet uitvallen des daags. Mogen uw piepers niet voortijdig uitschieten en uw geraniums niet te laat in bloei staan. Moge u zich nooit verslikken in het pepermuntje voor de preek, en moge uw weegschaal geen overmatige gewichtstoename doen blijken. Moge uw verstand u bewaren voor de invloed van goeroes, kwakzalvers en andere leveranciers van surrogaten van de gezonde leer.

Tenslotte, gedenk dit Ouwejaar wat Joost Vanden Vondelschreef naar aanleiding van Spreuken 23: *Den Wijn heel zoet en glad wel door de keele leekt Maer inden buyck hij dan gelijck een Slange steeckt.*

Carl Tuyl is predikant te Kingston, Ontario.

“Emigreren is eenzaam avontuur”

Christelijke Emigratie Centrale viert zestigste verjaardag

LEUSDEN, Nederland — De Christelijke Emigratie Centrale (CEC) bestaat zestig jaar en hield ter gelegenheid daarvan een bijeenkomst in het Dienstencentrum van de (syn.) Geref. Kerken in Leusden. Sprekers tijdens de zeer druk bezochte samenkomst waren o.a. de heer D.M. Boogaard, voorzitter van de CEC en prof. dr. K. Runia uit Kampen.

De in 1927 opgerichte CEC verstrekt informatie aan mensen die van plan zijn te emigreren, aan buitenlandse werknemers die naar hun land van herkomst willen terugkeren en aan mensen die tijdelijk in het buitenland gaan werken. Daarnaast helpt de CEC vluchtelingen bij het doormigreren en organiseert ze uitwisselingsprogramma's voor

jongeren met de VS en Canada.

In de organisatie en het werk staat de christelijke identiteit van de CEC centraal. Er is altijd een nauwe samenwerking geweest met de drie andere centrales en sinds september maakt de CEC met de gereformeerde (vrijg.), rooms-katholieke en algemene emigratie centrales deel uit van de Stichting Nederlands Migratie Instituut

(SNMI).

Aanleiding daartoe waren onder meer de bezuinigingsmaatregelen van het departement van sociale zaken. Die hebben tot gevolg dat de centrales op het totale budget van 1,5 miljoen 400.000 moeten gaan inleveren. Het probleem is dat de overheid aan de andere kant bepaalde taken wil afstoten naar de

Vervolg op pagina 23 ...

Taeke Knossen was ook aanwezig

Zaterdag 21 november vierde de Christelijke Emigratie Centrale in Leusden haar zestigste verjaardag. Een bijzonder feestelijk gebeuren. Tussen de sprekers, prof. dr. K. Runia en de heer D.M. Boogaard en de film “Wijder horizon” door, spraken we met enkele genodigden.

In de hal van het Dienstencentrum van de Gereformeerde Kerken loopt de directeur van de CEC, Kees Hulsman, nerveus van hot naar haar. Onder zijn arm een zelf klaargemaakt pakje brood, waar hij overigens nauwelijks aan toekomt.

Plotseling schrijdt er een oude, kale man binnen. Dick Boogaard kan zijn ogen niet geloven en fluistert: “Dat is één van de oprichters van de CEC, Taeke Knossen!”

Hij schudt de geestelijke vader de handen: “Wat fijn dat u er bent. Hoe is het met u?”

De heer Knossen: “Ik heb twee vijanden. Mijn bloedvaten vernauwen en ik heb ademhalingsmoeilijkheden.”

De oud-journalist — de heer Knossen werkte nog voor *De Standaard* van Abraham Kuyper —, stichtte in 1927 de CEC.

Knossen: “Ik was een paar keer in Canada geweest en het leek mij belangrijk om voor de Nederlanders die het dichtbevolkte Nederland wilden ontvluchten een geschikte, ruimere plek te bieden. Canada is prima voor Nederlanders. Achteraf zeg ik: ‘De CEC is geslaagd.’ Niet direct in het begin maar in de jaren vijftig hebben wij duizenden mensen mogen voorlichten en helpen bij het zoeken naar de juiste plaats, kerk en school.”

Uit de oude doos herinnert hij zich een reis met dr. Beets, naar Amerika. De mannen troffen daar “twaalf armoedige, gereformeerde kerkjes.”

“Maar nu staan er honderdtachtig met honderdvijfentachtigduizend leden!” Met welke problemen had u in het begin te kampen?

De heer Knossen (stomverbaasd): “Problemen? Nee, dankzij het feit dat ik een secretaresse had, konden we de vragen en zorgen van potentiële emigranten goed het hoofd bieden.”

De heer Knossen was veertig jaar lang secretaris en dertien jaar directeur van de CEC.

Knossen: “Het mooiste was voor mij om met mensen te werken. Het was zeer dankbaar om mentaal steun te kunnen bieden en praktisch wat het werk betreft. Hoe ze in een nieuw land moeten beginnen. En het is mij steeds weer opgevallen hoe belangrijk de rol van de vrouw is. Mijn ervaring is dat zij dikwijls beter doorzetten dan de mannen.”

Nou, daar kijk ik van op.

De heer Knossen: “Wij hebben twee kolonies in Brazilië gesticht van Drentse boeren. Dat waren fabrieksaardappelverbouwers. Het makkelijkst denkbare leven. Op een gegeven moment wilden die boeren terug. Maar de vrouwen hebben toen gezegd: ‘Wij zijn hier. Wij blijven hier!’ De nederzettingen werden een succes, maar niet in de eerste plaats dankzij de mannen.”

Andere mensen verdringen zich rondom de heer Knossen. Voordat hij wordt opgeslokt door oud-CEC'ers, stellen we nog een laatste vraag: “Hoe oud bent u?” Schalks, en een tikje ijdel, kijkt hij op: “Moet ik dat echt zeggen?” Na drie seconden: “Vooruit dan maar, ik ben 91.”

Overgenomen uit: Centraal Weekblad.

Oliebollen-dagen

Het nieuwe jaar heeft ons weer geleerd hoe vlug de tijd ons wel passeert, we mogen evenwel gewagen van gezelligheid en oliebolle-dagen.

Voor velen onzer nog echt een traditie, in ere gehouden met veel ambitie. Je moet je daar vanzelf voor bekwamen; m'n vrouw en ik doen het altijd samen.

Dat wil zeggen, zij maakt de "dough" en vertelt mij dan: dat doe je zo! dan neemt ze de schaal en laat het rijzen, om daarmee haar vakkunde te bewijzen.

De oven op de juiste temperatuur (het neemt niet langer dan twee uur) de olie wordt intussen opgezet en op het kookpunt wordt gelet.

En als het deeg dan is gerezen stop ik meteen de krant te lezen. De schaal de oven uit, 't is om te dromen ... alsof de maan was opgekomen.

Ik dacht, zonder dat ik iets vroeg, we hebben voor het hele jaar genoeg! Maar Brederode zei: "Het kan verkeren," de tijd zal ons wel anders leren.

De eersten gingen de hete olie in, voorwaar, een echte onderdompeling. Maar met dikke nu wat bruine lijven Kwamen ze weer spoedig boven drijven. En, o wat zijn we heden blij, we gaan dadelijk op onze andere zij.

En zo gezegd zo ook gedaan, het kon werkelijk niet mooier gaan. M'n wederga, steeds zonder dralen, laat weer een andere in de olie dalen.

En geduldig, dat was haar streven, om ze eerst wat vorm te geven. Het moet er ten leste wat op lijken, al moet je dan niet naar de gedaantes kijken.

Ik noem het "vak van alle vakken," om ze nooit een keer te bruin te bakken. Gebeurt dit wel, het is geen strop, Ik eet het dan direct maar op.

En plots, zeker om je te bezinnen, komen er een stelletje vrienden binnen. Niet eens gebeld, als met een zucht, vallen ze binnen, uit de lucht?

Wat dat betreft, in alle eer en deugd, hoe meer zielen hoe meer vreugd. En zonder enig passen en/of meten gaan we gezamenlijk aan het eten.

"De icing sugar" kwam er één in 't zin, en daar volgde een andere onderdompeling. De smaak? ik zeg het zeker keer op keer, Die oliebolle smaken alleen naar meer!

Hoeveel je er kan bakken in een uur? (nooit vragen naar goedkoop of duur) Ik durf te zeggen zonder dralen dat je de 200 wel kan halen.

En verder, wat voor iedereen een weet is, Je moet ze bakken als de olie heet is. En volgens mij, gaat het pas goed als je zulke karweitjes echt samen doet!

A. Jongejan,
Bayfield, Ontario

Christelijke Emigratie Centrale

... vervolg van vorige pagina.

centrales en in verband met de bezuinigingen van plan is een Intergouvernementele Commissie voor Migratie (ICM) op te richten waarin ook de vier centrales zullen participeren.

Voorzitter Boogaart van de CEC hierover: "Het vreemde is dat de overheid de privatisering wil stimuleren door taken af te stoten naar de clubs maar tegelijkertijd wil bezuinigen en een ICM gaat opzetten."

Directeur drs. C. Hulsman van de CEC: "We hebben drie consultants in dienst en het is de vraag of het er drie kunnen blijven. We kunnen er niet één missen, het is nu enorm druk. Het werk groeit heel sterk. Het aantal mensen dat voorlichting vraagt, neemt toe. Het emigratiecijfer ligt rond de 2.000 per jaar. De overheid kijkt alleen naar die cijfers en dat is fout, heel fout. Want het afgelopen jaar hebben 20.000 mensen om informatie gevraagd. Daarbij komt dat sociale zaken de vluchtelingen naar ons toeschuift."

"De centrales geven voorlichting om te voorkomen dat emigranten in verkeerde handen vallen en de dupe worden van mensen die op geld uit zijn. Er gaat namelijk nogal wat geld om bij emigratie. Wij hebben geen belang bij ons werk, vandaar dat onze voorlichting ook non-profit is."

Dat emigratie ingrijpend en moeilijk is, illustreerde prof. dr. K. Runia door wat over zijn eigen ervaringen te vertellen. Runia is in 1956 voor enkele jaren naar Australië geweest en was daar verbonden aan de opleiding voor predikanten.

"Emigratie is een ingrijpende zaak. Een van de grootste problemen is de taal, het communicatiemiddel dat echter een geweldige barrière wordt als je de landstaal niet kent. Emigratie is een eenzaam avontuur. Je moet alles loslaten.

Ik mag zeggen dat de CEC geweldig geholpen heeft. De grote verdienste is de voorlichting. Want als je emigreert, zit je met allerlei vragen over bijvoorbeeld school en kerk. De CEC heeft heel wat voorlichting gegeven over de kerken.

Emigratie is ondanks alle moeilijkheden voor veel mensen een zegen geweest, vaak een dure zegen. Een emigrant komt in een ontwortelingsproces en het duurt lang voordat je weer wortelt. Velen houden heimwee en wennen nooit volledig.

Maar toch is het een zegen. Je leert veel dingen op een nieuwe wijze te zien en op God te vertrouwen. Je weet dat je veilig bij Hem bent en op Hem kunt vertrouwen."

Overgenomen uit: Nederlands Dagblad.

Multiculturalisme is ... Canadees zijn

De veelbetekenende "Canadian Multiculturalism Act" werd kortgeleden geïntroduceerd in "the House of Commons" door Hon. David Crombie, Staatssecretaris van Canada en Minister verantwoordelijk voor Multiculturalisme.

De wet zal de constitutionele vrijheid van alle Canadezen, ongeacht de afkomst, op schrift stellen om hun culturele erfenis te beschermen, te versterken en te delen.

De voorgestelde wet wil de eenheid bevorderen en de Canadese identiteit versterken, de economische vooruitzichten verbeteren en Canada's rijke multiculturele realiteit kenbaar maken.

Deze belangrijke wet zal:

- het multiculturele beleid van Canada voortzetten;
- alle Canadezen als volwaardige en gelijke deelgenoten in de Canadese samenleving erkennen;
- de landelijke regering binden er op toe te zien, dat haar instellingen Canada's multiculturele verscheidenheid weergeven; en
- een wettelijke basis beschikbaar stellen die het Canadese burgerschap versterkt, behulpzaam is bij het beschermen van cultuur en vecht tegen discriminatie.

De "Canadian Multiculturalism Act" ... voor vandaag en de 21e eeuw.

Voor meer inlichtingen over deze wet kunt u de coupon uitknippen en versturen.



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Books/Meditation

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Education

How theories shape our lives

Nicholas P. Wolterstorff, *Reason Within the Bounds of Religion*. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1984. Second edition. 161 pages: paperback, \$7.25. Reviewed by Hendrik Hart, Senior Member in Systematic Philosophy, Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.

Even though this second edition of the successful little 1976 volume by the well-known philosopher from Calvin College has been on the market since 1984, it has not yet been announced on these pages. That, I believe, is a regretful omission and I hasten to

correct it.

The first edition became known for its brief and clear exposition of a very simple theory about what theories are and how we can influence them as Christian believers. Theories, Wolterstorff argued, are largely made up of three kinds of belief. There are data beliefs, which present what we take to be the facts of the matter under investigation. Then there are data background beliefs, which surround and undergird our data beliefs and make it possible for us to hold them. Finally, there are control beliefs. They are important convictions used especially in

the testing of our theories and not easily upset by the other two kinds of belief. The three sorts of belief are interchangeable and all three are found in all significant and sufficiently rich theories. What functions as control in one theory may be background in another, while both of these could be data in a third.

Wolterstorff contributed to Christian thinking about theory formation by arguing that important biblical proclamations should function as controls in our theories. This very simple and influential theory was set forth in a small-format booklet of just over 100 pages. It had originally been the substance of three lectures presented to faculties of colleges in the United States in the Reformed and Presbyterian tradition in 1974.

So the first edition concentrated on how we form our views. This second edition adds the material of a lecture originally presented to faculties of an international body of Reformed institutions of higher education in 1978 and later published as an article in 1980. In this new material Wolterstorff reflects on how we choose the subjects on which we decide to develop theoretical views. So this second edition offers a more complete story. It helps believers in both theory formation and in choice of subject matter.

Suffering and the Word

I believe it is important to announce this second edition because its focus is on our involvement in the suffering of our world and on our calling to contribute to the coming of God's peace. Wolterstorff argues that we ought to let ourselves be guided in choice of subject matter by considerations of how we contribute to renewal, liberation, and relief from suffering. In short, we must be guided by how our theories can be integrated into God's plan for the salvific reformation of creation.

Wolterstorff exhorts us to listen with *one* ear to the gospel and with the *other* to those who are suffering, in order to stop us from escaping into a myth of pure theory. That text was then six years old, though published one year after a newer work, *Until Justice and Peace Embrace*, in which the same thought is presented in closing. But now the text differs. We are told that openness to those who suffer becomes the channel for hearing the gospel. The two are dimensions of one another. If we don't hear the suffering, we can't hear the word. And if we don't hear the word, we can't hear the suffering. A

significant advance!

Somewhere in this book Wolterstorff gently criticizes Habermas for the selective telling of history. I would suggest that all our telling of history is selective, depending on our own journey and on how we perceive ourselves as fitting into broader journeys and their stories. I say this, because in his own journey Wolterstorff can be perceived to tell his own story selectively. However, unlike Wolterstorff's implied criticism of Habermas, I do not intend this to be a criticism. I select this part of Wolterstorff's journey and story because in it we find presented a dynamic, instructive, and encouraging course of development. This second edition of *Reason Within* gives us some glimpses into the life of a Christian scholar struggling and moving with the issues of his vocation.

I was surprised by one aspect of the text. I cannot recall the Wolterstorff of 1984 constantly referring to human beings as "he" or "man" or other male references. The background of this 1984 edition in a 1978 lecture is probably the explanation for the overly sexist language. In 1978 we philosophers were mostly still unaware of how inappropriate this use of a seemingly generic term really was.

This sexist language, as well as evidence that the viewpoint of the second edition had, in fact, already been significantly superceded in 1984, at least in its articulation if not also in its conceptual integration, make me suggest to Wolterstorff — with considerable conviction and urgency — that the theory he has been developing on the manner in which we control our scholarly views and on how we choose our subject matter, is a significant and helpful theory and needs to be stated with as much integrality and freshness as he can muster.

Eloquent integration

He himself may not recall that in January of 1974, before he had begun thinking about these matters, he told me that these sorts of theories were uninteresting and unimportant to him. In October of that same year, after he had responded to an invitation to begin thinking about this field, he told me that he now perceived this topic to be very crucial and that perhaps we were the last generation, at least for a while, to have the opportunity of some Christian influence here. A drastic and speedy turnabout indeed! And subsequent developments show how sincerely he meant this. But also: all the more reason to ask for a new, brief, clear booklet which tells anew the story of how Christian believers might form and

choose their theories.

In the meantime we have the second edition of *Reason Within*. It is a helpful little book, from which all who are interested in theory will benefit. High school and college teachers should really be thoroughly familiar with it. And some of them will find that they can enrich the lives of their students by going through this book with them. But pastors, too, will benefit from reading this book, especially from the second part on theory choice and the new life in Christ. That part, since it so eloquently integrates the abstract business of theory formation with the dynamics of Christian faith in a world full of suffering, makes instructive reading also for all who once were in college and university and who now are in law, business, engineering, or whatever other profession touches the heartbeat of our culture.

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Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Babel undone

"Now there were ... Jews from every nation under heaven Utterly amazed, they asked: ... 'how is it that each of us hears them in his own language? ... We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!' Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, 'What does this mean?'" (Acts 2:5-12)

There is a story from the early days of the human race which walks hand in hand with Pentecost through history. The two are like children riding a playground see-saw together, balancing each other across the span of time. Neither is complete in itself; each reaches out to the other to find its own significance.

The first story is that strange spectacle of Babel in Genesis 11. The whole human race, in the years after the flood, adopts atheistic humanism as its working philosophy. "We don't need the God of the heavens!" is the rallying cry; "There is one God, and He is us!"

And so the people begin to build their brave new world around themselves. A single skyscraper will house them all. The flagpole at the top will float the banner of freedom: a huge yellow smiling face, with the words underneath, "I'm OK, you're OK!" Only the God of heaven is confined to an ethnic ghetto, because He speaks a different language.

You know the rest of the story, of course. God takes counsel with his advisors and decides to visit the construction site. At coffee time the next day, as the crews are reaching for their thermoses, the friendly bantering turns into verbal abuse. No one can seem to make sense of the strange "babel" of the others, and tempers flare as tensions slice through the community. The legions of heaven look on and know: "United they stand; divided they fall!" God has disrupted human language, destroying the depraved unity of the race.

And then, centuries and thousands of ethnic wars later, as the bigoted minds of humans shun a child for the strange twist of a tongue, God steps out of heaven again. While the splintered world shakes its many heads in the "babel" of disbelief, a single voice pierces the fog of its divided mind. A single word speaks love, and a single Spirit creates a new humanity, not based on the evils of human ingenuity, but rather on the grace of divine forgiveness.

The God who defused the power of the evil one by turning it into a cacophany of dissonant voices at Babel, now binds the many into a single new humanity with the delightful miracle of tongues at Pentecost. "We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!"

And the church is born!

*Elect from every nation, yet One o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation, One Lord, One Faith, One Birth,
One Holy Name She blesses, partakes One Holy Food,
And to One Hope She presses with every grace endued.*

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor of First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ontario.